GMA signs ₱804-B budget; health dep't gets ₱13B

Story on PAGE A4

Gov't receivership urged for Meralco

By Ronnel W. Domingo and Michael Lim Ubac

A CONSUMER group is urging the government to place Manila Electric Co. under receivership to protect the interest of its more than three million consumers.

Receivership involves the appointment of a receiver by a court on behalf of all parties to preserve the property involved in a

GOV'T/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

SARS-like symptoms down X-ray technician

By Armand N. Nocum

A FEMALE X-ray technician of the San Lazaro Hospital who attended to Adela Catalon, the nursing aide from Canada who is feared to have died of SARS has been placed under hospital isolation after she came down with a fever last Friday.

The X-ray technician became the country's

SARS-LIKE/ A19

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Thursday, April 24, 2003 ★★★ 50 pages / 4 sections / vol. 18 / no. 135 P15
website: www.inq7.net

Pinoy doc in Toronto alive

Confined in critical care unit of hospital

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

THE FILIPINO-CANADIAN doctor, who was reported to have died of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in a hospital in Toronto, Canada, last week, is alive, his medical secretary told the INQUIRER on Tuesday night.

The confusion among members of the Filipino-Canadian community in Metro Toronto over whether the doctor had died or not was due to the policy of Canadian health authorities against releasing names of SARS patients and fatalities.

The doctor's secretary at his clinic in Scarborough City in the eastern part of Metro Toronto, told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that the confusion arose after the death of another SARS patient at the Sunnybrook Health Science Center where the doctor is confined and reportedly recuperating.

The secretary said the doctor, whom she described as in his 50s, developed chills and exhibited other symptoms of SARS on the night of April 4, and was brought to the Sunnybrook Health Science Center.

Two international news agencies also reported the death of the Toronto doctor on Monday, citing two Philippine health officials.

The Associated Press quoted Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit as saying that the "physician in

PINOY/ A18

EMERGENCY ROOM

BEHIND the masks are medical interns at the San Lazaro Hospital, one of two government hospitals designated to confine and treat probable SARS cases. The other is the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine.

AFP

'We're treated like outcasts in our own land'

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ALCALA, Pangasinan—"We feel like outcasts in our own land," said a 67-year-old man who has lived all his life in Barangay Vacante, home village of Adela Catalon who died of probable Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) on April 14.

A 22-year-old resident said: "The way we are treated by other people is annoying, even insulting. It's as if we're lepers, and people turn aside when they see us coming."

The municipal council here yesterday declared a state of health emergency in Barangay Vacante, where three zones are under quarantine by order of the Department of Health.

With the declaration, the barangay can use the town's calamity fund to buy provisions for the food and household needs of residents covered by the quarantine period that is to last until April 26, Mayor Juanito Collado said.

But he said the state of health emergency would cover the entire Vacante (pop: 696 as of the 2000 census), about 7 kilometers from the Alcala town proper.

In Pasay City, President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed "regret" at the "tragedy that has befallen" the woman's family, but upheld the quarantine imposed on Vacante.

"We must take a sensible view

BRGY/ A5

8th Filipino down with SARS in Hong Kong

By Cherry Velarde
Contributor

HONG KONG—The number of Filipinos with Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Hong Kong has increased to eight.

The latest victim is a middle-aged male who has been confined at the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital since last week, according to Philippine Consul General Victoria Bataclan.

She said the patient was now in "stable condition."

It was not known how he contracted the disease. No other details were given to protect the patient's privacy.

The consulate received another reported SARS case involving a domestic helper but Bataclan said this could not yet be included in the official tally because the case has not been confirmed by the Hong Kong health department.

According to official data, of the total eight Filipino SARS cases , one has died (domestic helper Adela Dalingay); three are still in the hospital (including the male patient), and four have recovered and have been discharged from the hospital.

"The number of cases has increased, if you look at zero to eight, but I would not say this is a trend," said Bataclan.

Nine Filipino SARS cases had been reported in Singapore as of two weeks ago, according to the Department of Labor and Employment. Of the nine, five have been discharged from the hospital.

8TH FILIPINO/ A18

Anti-SARS measures fail; 16 more dead

HONG KONG—China yesterday sent out special squads to round up people showing SARS symptoms and Singapore vowed to jail citizens breaking quarantine orders as various governments adopted increasingly desperate measures to contain the killer epidemic.

Despite the global drive, the flu-like virus showed no signs of slowing: sixteen more people died from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and hundreds of new SARS cases surfaced.

China on Wednesday reported nine new deaths from atypical pneumonia, raising the SARS death toll on the mainland to 106. Six new deaths pushed Hong Kong's death toll to 105. A 64-year-old man hospitalized as a probable SARS patient died in Ontario late Tuesday, bringing Canada's death toll to 15.

Seven weeks after the World Health Organization issued a global alert on SARS—for which there is no cure or vaccine—at

ANTI-SARS/ A18

SCREENING for SARS at Singapore's Changi International Airport does not leave anything to chance. For the past week, it has been using state-of-the-art thermal imaging scanners to take the temperature of arriving passengers from SARS-affected areas.

AFP

Adela's 2nd homecoming was her last

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FOR ADELA CATALON, the second homecoming turned out to be the last.

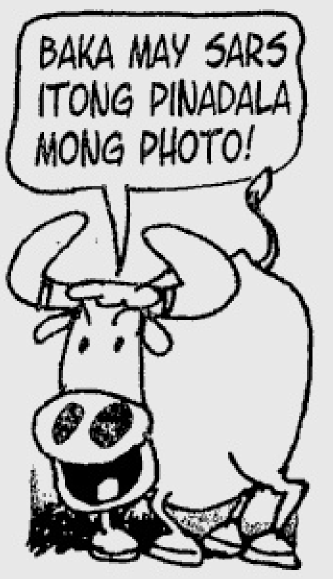
She spent more than 20 of her 46 years in Canada working as a nursing attendant. The first time she returned to her native Alcala in Pangasinan was 10 years ago, and the second time was for good.

She arrived on April 5, in time to attend the high school graduation of a niece whom she had promised to put through college. But with her death at the San Lazaro Hospital on April 14—a probable SARS case—that promise will go unfulfilled.

A cousin remembers Adela fondly, if vaguely: "I was very young when she left."

Yet, the cousin said, it was

ADELA'S/ A5


BAKA MAY SARS ITONG PINADALA MONG PHOTO!

PDI fotog scorned, shunned

By Val Handumon
INQUIRER photographer

I WAS a victim of the scorn heaped upon those even remotely connected with SARS patients.

Early Tuesday morning, I received a call from our chief photographer ordering me to go to Barangay Vacante in Alcala, Pangasinan, the hometown of the first reported probable SARS carrier Adela Catalon, a nursing aide working in Canada, who died on April

PDI/ A6

GMA orders DOJ to probe Mindoro murders

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered an investigation of the murder of two human rights activists in Oriental Mindoro blamed on the military.

Speaking before the graduation rites of around 26,000 barangay watchers in Pasay yesterday, Ms Macapagal said she had directed Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong to look into the killing of Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy.

Marcellana was secretary general of the human rights watchdog Karapatan in Southern Tagalog and Gumanoy was chair of the Katipunan ng mga Samahang Magbubukid sa Timog Katagalugan (Kasama-TK).

Datumanong, head of the presidential committee on human rights, has formed a task force led by Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida to investigate the murders.

"We're concerned about charges of vigilantism being aired in relation (to) the killing of activists in Mindoro Oriental," the President said. "When there are such charges, authorities must step in to get to the root of the matter soonest."

On Monday night, masked men supposedly belonging to Alsa Masa, an anti-communist vigilante group, abducted Marcellana, Gumanoy and three others in Naujan

GMA/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Batanes Group of Islands will experience stormy weather. Coastal waters of these areas will be rough to very rough. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/24/03

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
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Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Ads depict Ping as hero

By Christine O. Avendaño

FIVE television advertisements that depicted him as a modern-day hero were the work of his supporters, Sen. Panfilo Lacson admitted yesterday.

But he insisted that these had nothing to do with his presidential bid next year.

The ads series aired for a month starting March 6 in the vote-rich provinces of Baguio, Davao, Iloilo, Leyte, Tacloban and Bicol. In Metro Manila, they started airing Easter Sunday, and were expected to have their last run yesterday.

Lacson said the commercials were merely meant to counter "black propaganda" being waged against him.

"I have the right to defend myself," Lacson told reporters, as he shrugged off comments about the series being seen by critics as consisting an early political campaign.

"They can say what they want," said Lacson, pointing out that nowhere in the ads were viewers asked to vote for him.

The commercials were carried by ABS-CBN, Net 25 and Channel 13. A source from Lacson's camp said GMA-7 ran them in the provinces but not in Metro Manila.

Four of the ads showed people relating how Lacson had helped them when he was with the Philippine National Police. Among them was businesswoman Robina Gokongwei, who told of Lacson's role in her rescue from kidnappers in 1981. The fifth had Lacson's son Jeric lamenting how his father was being accused of many misdeeds.

SHELLING IN PIKIT

Moro rebs attack in Gloria's wake

COTABATO CITY—Five Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels were killed as the group went on a rampage during a visit by President Macapagal-Arroyo, the military said Wednesday.

MILF fighters fired two mortar rounds at government troops stationed in Fort Pikit, as soon as the President left the North Cotabato town on Tuesday afternoon.

Two soldiers were wounded, according to provincial military chief Major General Generoso Senga.

Senior Insp. Glicerio Ragudo, Pikit police chief, said the mortar was fired around 4 p.m. from Bulol village, some two kilometers away.

Before the attack, Ms Macapagal was in Barangay Bagoinged, about four kilometers from Bulol, to personally oversee the return of residents displaced by the military offensive against the separatist rebels, which started on Feb. 11.

"The MILF was trying to disrupt the visit of the President," Senga said. But other military officials said the shelling was not intended for Ms Macapagal.

Col. Carduzo Luna, commander of the Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade, said it was part of the MILF's harassment campaign against soldiers in Pikit.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu admitted that his group fired the two mortars, but would not say if this was linked to the President's visit.

Five MILF rebels were killed in a separate attack on a detachment of Army special forces in the town of Sultan-sa-Barongis, Maguindanao, according to local army brigade commander Col. Agustin Dimaala.

A belated report sent to Camp Aguinaldo said about 150 MILF men led by Commanders Edu Maulana and Ustadz Wahid Halil opened fire on the 41st Special Forces Company headquarters in the Reina Regente complex. The attack triggered a two-hour firefight, in which four soldiers were wounded.

The report did not identify the wounded soldiers.

Shortly before Ms Macapagal arrived in Pikit on Tuesday, four Marines securing the area where her helicopter was to land were injured in the explosion of a suspected land mine. The military could not confirm which group was behind the blast.

The MILF suggested that it could have been caused by one of many unexploded bombs dropped from Air Force planes during the recent military offensive.

Kabalu likewise denied it was his group that torched a Christian church and 10 houses in Barangay Kiga in South Upi, also in Maguindanao.

Senga said militiamen tried but failed to prevent some 50 suspects from harassing the villagers. He said the men also carted away at least 15 farm animals belonging to the residents.

Kabalu believed it was the work of bandits. "We respect churches and we are not engaged in cattle rustling," he said.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol has urged Ms Macapagal to pressure the MILF into negotiations, saying "any activity undertaken in the name of peace" should be directed to the group.

Meanwhile, Luna said government troops were bracing for more attacks, as the MILF seemed to be "feeling the pinch" of the military presence in the area. *Edwin O. Fernandez and Rosa-May V. de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with Martin P. Marfil and a report from AFP*

GMA not covered by SARS quarantine

By Carlito Pablo

UNLESS she volunteers, President Macapagal-Arroyo is not required to undergo voluntary quarantine when she returns from a one-day summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to be hosted by Thailand on the dreaded Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit indicated this in a briefing in Malacañang on government efforts to contain SARS.

At the same time, Manila International Airport Authority general manager Edgardo Manda warned yesterday that those who lie about their health conditions at the airport will face stiff sanctions.

He said giving false information in the health checklist for arriving passengers was tantamount to falsification of public documents punishable by law.

In explaining the President's exemption from voluntary quarantine, Dayrit said Thailand was still considered SARS-free.

"Thailand is really SARS free," Dayrit said, noting that while there had been seven suspected cases and two related deaths in that country, there has been "no local transmission" of the disease.

Besides, Dayrit noted, President Macapagal will not be taking a commercial flight but rather fly on board a Lear jet for the April 29 SARS summit among the 10 Asean state leaders in Bangkok.

"Strictly speaking if the President goes there, there's no SARS there," Dayrit said.

Dayrit said that the need for Ms Macapagal to quarantine herself has to be balanced with what he called as the "exigencies and demands of her job."

Dayrit also noted that the policy of requiring people to undergo quarantine applies only to those who came from SARS-infected countries.

Dayrit defended President Macapagal's acceptance of Thailand's invitation for a summit on SARS, a disease that has been claiming scores of victims in various countries.

"There's a lot to gain from this meeting," he said. "This I think is a necessary travel."

The government's SARS management team has drawn up a five-point plan to address the SARS threat.

These are to prevent or minimize the entry of "imported SARS cases," prevent local spread of SARS cases, prevent mortality through effective clinical management, public education and to "manage media and non-health consequences of SARS" like its impact on tourism.

In the same briefing, Manda said that the government is acquiring three Singapore-made body heat sensors to be installed at the airport.

Manda said that each sensor, originally designed for military purposes, costs from $50,000 to $68,000.

The airport manager also warned that arriving passengers who give false information about their health condition would be sanctioned.

He had recommended to Dayrit the issuance of an order that would penalize those who would try to hide any symptoms of respiratory tract infection on the health checklist issued by the department to arriving passengers at the arrival area of the Naia.

"I am strongly looking at the possibility of penalizing passengers entering false data about their health on the checklist. That's why I am seeking the help of the health department to come up with stricter guidelines," he said.

He said passengers who lie to health officers must not only be penalized, but must also be charged with falsification of public documents.

He advised passengers not to take for granted the health checklist, saying it is an official record duly recognized by government agencies and medical practitioners in corroborating if an arriving passenger from SARS-infected countries do not carry the virus.

He also warned passengers that the airport's medical team and health department are using highly sophisticated equipment to check if a person is a suspected SARS victim.

Dr. John Simons, a British consultant on infectious diseases who recently visited the country, recommended the legislation of laws on SARS prevention.

Manda said it is more practical to put more teeth on the Quarantine Law by the Department of Health.

"At this point in time, legislation would be a very tedious process," he said.

He added the government must take proactive approaches in preventing the SARS virus from contaminating the public.

Saudi bars pilgrims from SARS areas

RIYADH—Saudi Arabia, home to Islam's holiest shrines, has stopped issuing umrah, or minor pilgrimage, visas to Muslims in the Far East because of fears over Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), an official said Wednesday.

Saudi missions in China, Singapore, Hong Kong and the Philippines have been instructed to stop issuing umrah visas indefinitely, Undersecretary of the hajj (pilgrimage) ministry, Mohammad Bentin told Okaz daily.

Muslims all over the world are granted these visas from Saudi embassies throughout the year, except for the duration of the hajj, which is the main Muslim pilgrimage.

The kingdom earlier this month barred entry to nationals of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Vietnam as a precautionary measure against SARS.

Travelers arriving from east and south Asian countries would be subjected to stringent screening at the airports and kept under observation for 10 days, the ministry added.

Saudis have been advised against traveling to several Asian countries due to the outbreak of the atypical pneumonia that has claimed more than 234 lives worldwide.

All Muslims are required to make the journey to Mecca at least once in their lifetime if they have the means to do so. AFP

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It's Pimentel credibility for Erap's defense

By Volt Contreras

A HIGH ranking state prosecutor yesterday said deposed president Joseph Estrada apparently just wants to ride on Sen. Aquilino Pimentel's credibility in a bid to present questionable pieces of defense evidence relating to the "Jose Velarde" account.

"Definitely he would be used to lend his credibility to the second envelope (of Velarde documents). But I know the good senator can see through this scheme," Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said.

But Pimentel said Villa-Ignacio should "know better" to suggest such a thing.

Villa-Ignacio was reacting to pronouncements made on Monday by Estrada naming Pimentel as one of the witnesses he would want to tap in his defense.

Pimentel was the Senate President who oversaw the opening of the second envelope on Feb. 14, 2001, days after Estrada's ouster. Earlier, Estrada's Senate impeachment trial ended in the walkout of the House prosecutors after the senator-judges voted 11-10 not to open the envelope.

PIMENTEL: 'I will only state the truth.'

Villa-Ignacio recalled that when the envelope was finally opened, impeachment trial complainants led by human rights lawyer Romulo Kapulong suspected tampering.

One of the items from the envelope which appeared fraudulent to Kapulong was an Aug. 25, 1999 letter purportedly signed by Estrada's crony Jaime Dichaves and addressed to Equitable PCIBank, he said. The letter had Dichaves asking EPCIB senior vice president Romy Dy Tang to open a savings/current account under the name "Jose Velarde" at the bank's Binondo branch.

Villa-Ignacio described the letter as "part of a cover-up." And at face value, he said, it contains "no categorical statement that the account belonged to Dichaves."

The Estrada camp, though, has long revealed plans to cite the letter in court to prove that Dichaves, not the ex-president, owned the Velarde account.

Estrada is accused of having maintained the account using an alias to hide ill-gotten wealth that included kickbacks, commissions and jueteng payola collections.

Villa-Ignacio said the prosecution panel has no objections to Pimentel being called to the stand, saying the defense lawyers can call in any witness "who they think can help them."

Pimentel, however, said yesterday he won't allow himself to be used by anyone.

"I will only state the truth," Pimentel said.

But Pimentel stressed that if the court is interested to find out the contents of the second envelope, it can merely "subpoena the envelope." *With a report from Christine Avendaño*

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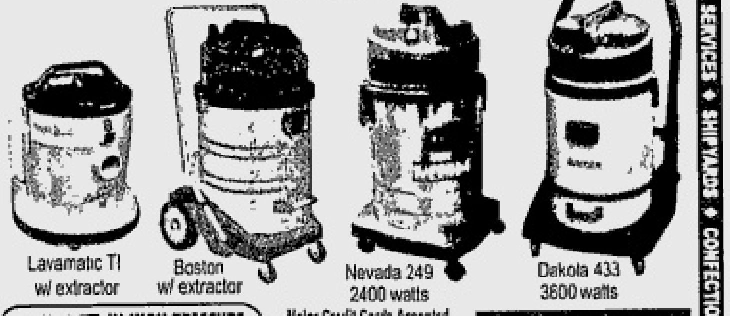

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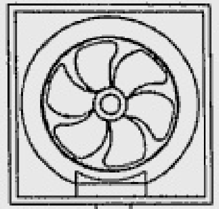

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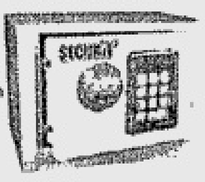

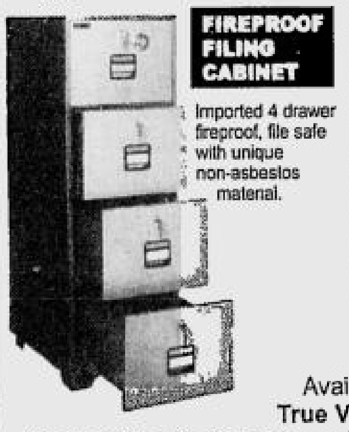

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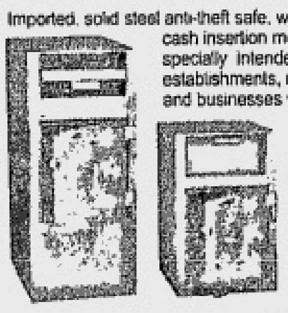

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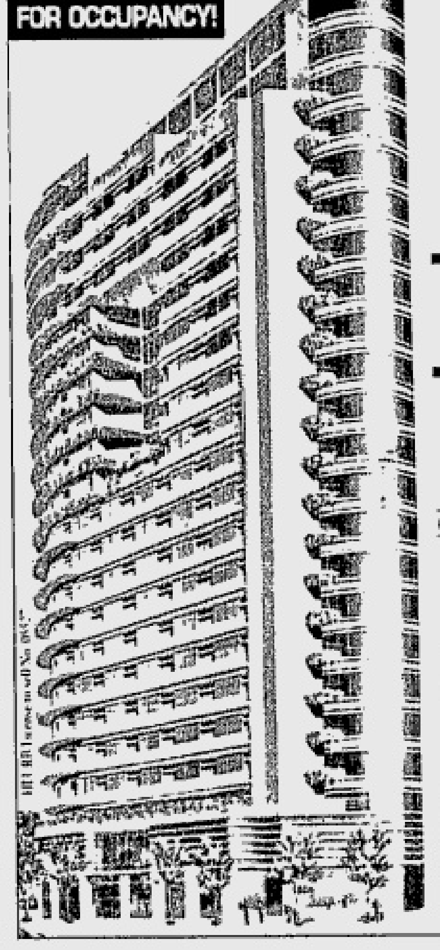

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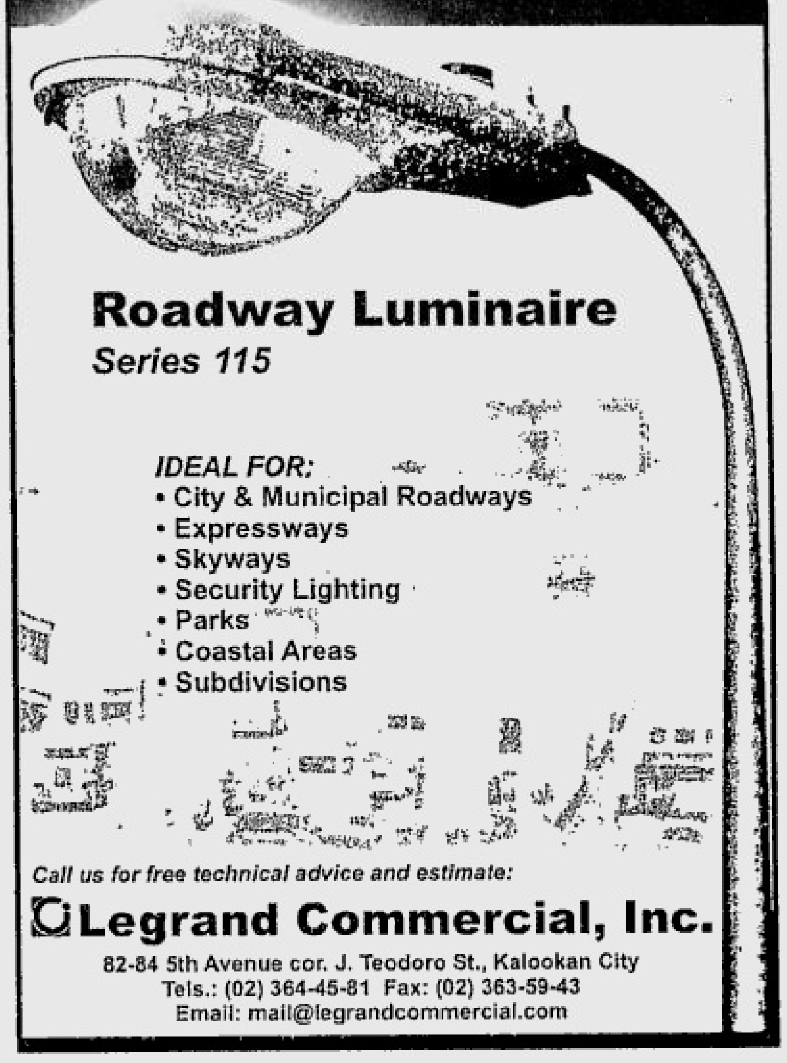

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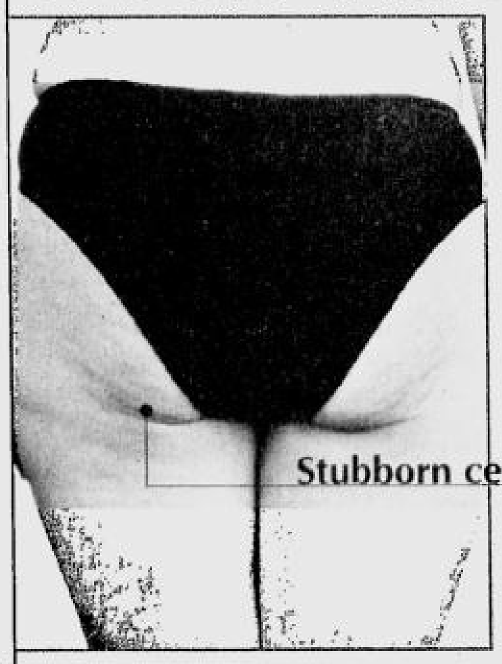

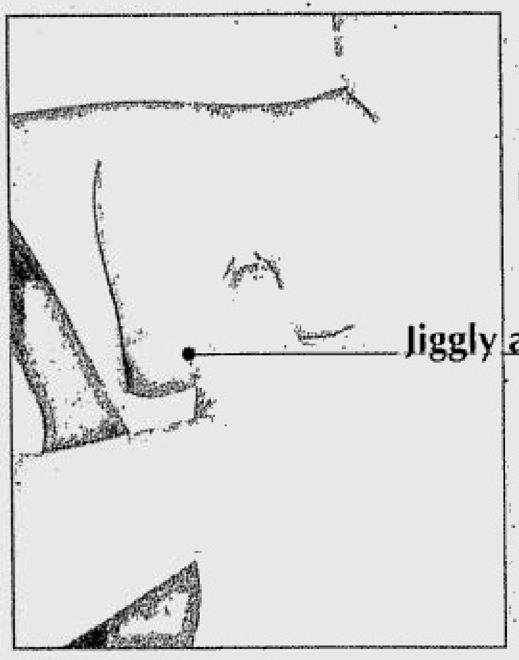

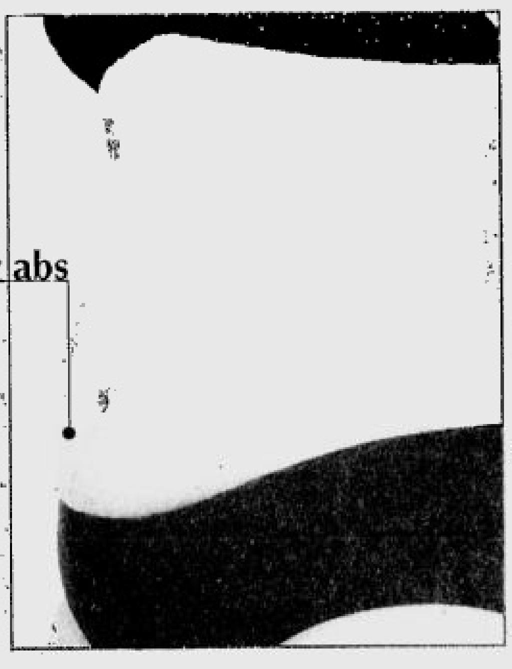

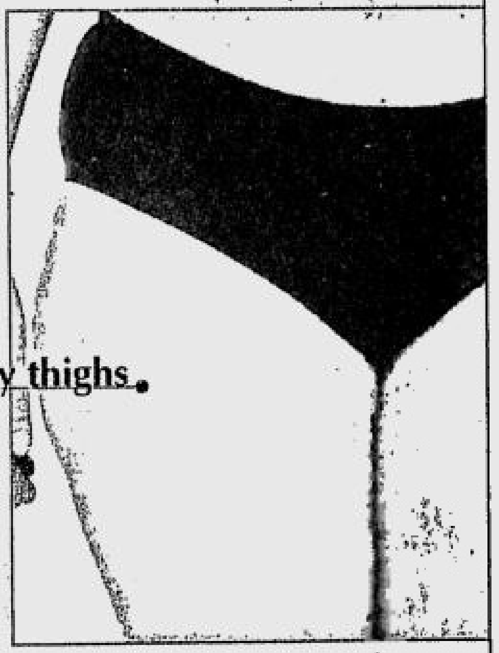

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GMA signs ₱804-B budget; ₱13B goes to health

By Carlito Pablo

THE GOVERNMENT has allotted P13 billion for "sustaining improvements in health" in this year's P804-billion budget signed into law yesterday by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Department of Health, at the frontline in the fight against the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, got a P10.4-billion allocation for 2003.

Ms Macapagal earlier set aside a P1-billion contingency fund to control and manage possible SARS outbreaks in the country.

The DOH ranks sixth among agencies which got the biggest chunks of the 2003 budget. Historically, its allocation has always been far lesser than other departments.

The Department of Education got the biggest slice with P106.5 billion, followed by the Public Works and Highways with P53.2 billion, Interior and Local Government with P44.2 billion, National Defense with P42.6 billion and Agriculture with P16.5 billion.

The Department of Transportation and Communications got P9.5 billion; the judiciary, P7.6 billion; the Department of Finance, P6.7 billion; and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, P6.2 billion.

Malacañang noted yesterday that this year's budget was 2.9 percent bigger than last year's P780.8-billion budget.

It said the 2003 budget commits the government to limit its deficit to P202 billion, or about 4.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho said on Tuesday the budget deficit for the three months of this year to March had already reached P58.9 billion, or 6.7 percent higher than the targeted ceiling for the period.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said 29.5 percent of the budget would go to social services while economic services would get 20.2 percent. Defense spending would be 5.1 percent of the total.

However, payments and servicing of government loans would amount to P228.7 billion, or 28.4 percent of the total.

Boncodin said the government would maintain growth despite tight spending under the budget, which she described as "modest by many standards but aggressive in the areas that count most."

She said the government would not pump-prime the economy through additional deficit spending.

As part of the deficit control measures, the government is targeting revenue collections of P584.1 billion this year, an increase of three percent over last year.

Boncodin said she was not worried that the budget deficit for January-March exceeded the ceiling.

"I'm very confident we will recover in the second quarter." Preliminary figures indicated that the budget deficit in April will be within the ceiling, she said.

The budget deficit blew out to P212.7 billion in 2002, compared with an original target of P130 billion. It was forced to revise the target upwards due to poor tax collections in the first half of the year. *AFP*

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GMA: Iraq mission not about money

By Christian Esguerra and Carlito Pablo

IT'S about goodwill, not money.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday took a swipe at critics who have been censuring her decision to send humanitarian and peacekeeping forces to war-torn Iraq.

"Let's not frontload the issue of money as if this were a market sale," the President said. "This is about international goodwill and democracy."

Her critics have argued that the money to be used in sending the mission to Iraq can be put to better use within the country—in Mindanao, for instance.

Ms Macapagal defended her post-war Iraq policy in a speech during the graduation of 26,000 village watchmen (barangay tanod) at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City. She even asked the "graduates," who had completed training on police and antiterrorism work, to help explain the policy to the people.

"Our participation in humanitarian and peacekeeping activities must be viewed within the framework of international collaboration," she said. "The terms of reference will be ironed out in due time. (Meanwhile,) we are determined to move on with whatever we have."

The Philippine contingent composed of 300 soldiers, 100 policemen and 100 medical workers is expected to leave on May 15.

Malacañang came under fire after the police hierarchy admitted Monday that the peacekeepers would each receive $3.50 (about P192) daily allowance. Members of the Filipino contingent got $90 each as part of the United Nations' peacekeeping missions in Cambodia, Kosovo and East Timor.

Earlier, Malacañang said the government would shoulder all costs for at least 30 days, after which the United States would foot the bill.

But Foreign Secretary Blas Ople has admitted that the P600-million budget for the contingent had yet to be sourced.

Several senators yesterday questioned the legality and cost of the mission.

"It does not serve the national interest one whit," Sen. Joker Arroyo said in a statement.

Arroyo said the government was apparently sending the troops to please the US, and that this could be "misconstrued 'by Arab countries as overt intrusion (into) Iraqi's affairs."

Sen. Juan Flavier balked at the number of troops to be dispatched.

It was a violation of the Constitution, Sen. Ralph Recto pointed out, "without funding authority from Congress."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon filed a resolution seeking the Senate foreign relations committee and other committees to probe the government's plan.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon said it was a "policy judgment on the part of the President." *With Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora*

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'We're treated like outcasts in our own land'

From page A1

of the situation," she told hundreds of barangay tanod gathered at the Cuneta Astrodome. "The quarantine of a barangay does not mean that its residents are SARS carriers. It is merely a standard precaution [instituted while] our health authorities determine the facts, which shall be made available to our people."

The President said she was seeking "total cooperation from our people wherever they are."

She again appealed to those who feel they are at risk of having SARS to quarantine themselves and seek assistance from health authorities.

"The welfare of our nation rests upon the sense of duty of each and every citizen," she said.

Ms Macapagal expressed thanks to the Vacante folk for "submitting" to the quarantine and appreciation for "their discipline and sense of sacrifice for the greater good of the public."

But earlier reports said the villagers were angered by being suspected as SARS carriers and worried about their food and livelihood during the quarantine period.

Food packs

When he visited Vacante yesterday, Collado was informed that the food packs for the residents in the quarantined zones had still to be distributed.

The packs—containing canned goods, rice, noodles, coffee and bath and laundry soap—are expected to last for three days.

"The residents of the other zones were complaining [about their exclusion] in the distribution of food packs, so we decided to declare the entire village under a state of health emergency," the mayor said.

Gov. Victor Agbayani said the provincial government would give material and technical assistance to the quarantined residents.

"We will also prepare food packs for the residents to augment those to be given by the Alcala government," Agbayani said at a meeting on SARS in San Fernando, La Union.

The regional office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development is likewise preparing 1,000 food packs.

Contact tracing

In Manila, the DOH is tracking down those who took the same connecting flight from Japan to Manila as the nursing aide.

They have been identified by health officials from a copy of the flight seating arrangement furnished by Japan Airlines (JAL).

Ruby de Guzman, a JAL executive in Manila, said the airline had fully complied with the request of the DOH in connection with the flight.

"We are prepared to cooperate with the health officials and grant any request so long as they put it in writing," De Guzman told the INQUIRER by phone. "We have already given them everything they requested."

Dr. Antonio Amparo, chief of the Bureau of Quarantine at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, made the request for the flight seating arrangement to the airline in behalf of the DOH and the National Epidemiology Center on April 21.

In Baguio City, health officials are "contact tracing" five people whom Adela visited before she died.

The officials said the woman contacted the five people in the course of looking for a cancer specialist to treat her father in Alcala. *(See story on Page A1.)*

'Stay calm'

At the meeting on SARS in San Fernando City, Governor Agbayani appealed to Vacante residents to "stay calm, exercise discipline and be understanding."

"We want to protect Alcala and the rest of the country," he said, adding:

"The quarantine is fundamental in containing the disease. Anyway, it is not yet confirmed that [the nursing aide] actually died of SARS, and it is only a few days before the quarantine period expires."

Agbayani appealed to reporters to "stick to the truth and not sensationalize [stories] so as not to cause more pain to the affected people," and to observe quarantine procedures to avoid infection or become carriers.

Regional DOH director Eduardo Janairo admitted that it was difficult to contain SARS. He said people naturally wanted to go to such places as markets and their workplaces.

The INQUIRER learned that some Vacante residents had defied the quarantine by passing through farms to get to neighboring towns.

Agbayani, who chairs the regional development council in the Ilocos, asked the regional police to send additional teams to uphold the quarantine and maintain calm in the barangay.

He asked the other governors in the region covering Pangasinan, La Union, Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte to allocate funds for possible SARS cases in their provinces.

The DOH plans to build SARS isolation rooms in Barangay Bonuan Binloc in Dagupan City, where an old hospital building is located, and in the Mangatarem District Hospital, which the Pangasinan government maintains.

Agbayani, however, asked the DOH to first consult with the local governments. He pointed out that the residents might not approve of such a plan.

He also asked the DOH to assign two quarantine doctors to the region—one for the Sual port in Pangasinan and another for the Damortis and Poro Point entry in La Union.

He said the DOH should meet with mayors and residents of coastal towns to inform them of the care required in dealing with fishing crews from other countries who might be carrying the SARS virus.

Forcible quarantine

At the House, Negros Occidental Rep. Apolinario Lozada Jr. (Lakas) is proposing a measure that will give the military and the police powers to forcibly quarantine suspected SARS cases.

It will also identify the government facilities where SARS carriers may be held for a certain period.

"Voluntary quarantine is no longer applicable when so many people are dying because of this plague. Possible SARS carriers would have to cooperate with the government to contain the spread of the virus," he said.

Lozada said among the steps that the government could take under the proposed bill was sealing off public or private areas such as hospitals, dwellings, commercial buildings, clinics, resorts, malls, recreation areas and other enclosed public places.

"The government can even isolate the whole barangay where suspected SARS carriers are living," he said, adding:

"This law is far more urgent than the anti-terrorism bill because the SARS virus can kill anyone without provocation. A SARS carrier is like a walking timebomb." *With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Christian V. Esguerra, Norman Bordadora and Juliet Labog-Javellana in Manila; Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Adela's 2nd homecoming...

From page A1

Adela who helped make possible for her and her husband a tour of Canada a few years ago.

"She sent me all the documents that [we] needed to get a visa for Canada," the cousin said.

By that and other accounts, the family was closely knit.

Adela completed a course in midwifery at a college in Urdaneta City. After graduation she found employment in Spain, and from there proceeded to Ontario in Canada where she worked in a nursing home.

Later, the third of four siblings filed a petition for her parents to stay with her in her adopted country. Both parents worked and sent financial help to the family members they left behind.

The parents came home in February. Adela's father died Tuesday—officially of colon cancer but he was considered a suspected SARS case.

Another cousin, one of Adela's "close contacts" during her short stay in their barangay, said she sent them gifts like bath soap, canned goods, clothes and the usual stuff sent home by Filipinos working abroad.

The 35-year-old cousin said she did not resent being "in isolation" and being regularly checked by medical personnel for SARS symptoms.

"I washed her clothes when she was here," the cousin said.

Another relative said that when Adela arrived on April 5, she already had fever.

"One night she wanted to take a bath, but complained that it was too cold," the relative said.

She took medication and the fever subsided, only to recur. She also complained of back pain.

During her brief stay, the cousin said, Adela visited only two houses—that of her brother, the barangay chair, and that of their parents. "Maybe because she was not feeling very well."

Yet despite her condition, the dutiful daughter was earlier said to have made trips to several provinces in search of a doctor to treat her father.

Now the family is in anguish over the way Adela was treated in death.

"We were not allowed even to bring her coffin inside the house," a cousin lamented. "The [Department of Health] people wanted us to take her body directly to the cemetery. But we pitied her because it was almost dawn when her body arrived in the village."

The cousin called a priest, who reportedly told the mourners to take the body to the church for the final sacrament.

"But we were prevented from bringing her to the church, so we just requested the priest to go to the cemetery," the cousin said.

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Gov't receivership . . .

From page A1

suit and to protect the rights of the parties under the court's direction.

Once under receivership, Meralco should be rehabilitated by auctioning off some of its franchise holdings that were due to expire this year, the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms (Nasecore) said yesterday.

Nasecore president Pete Ilagan said the government should also assert its right as the biggest shareholder in Meralco and take over the management of the firm.

"If the present (Meralco management) continues to bandy the bankruptcy line, the government should take the cue and assert its interest," Ilagan said.

Meralco has warned that it will go bankrupt if it refunds consumers the excess charges, estimated at more than P28 billion, that it collected starting 1994.

The Supreme Court has ordered Meralco to refund its customers the excess charges, which stemmed from the utility firm's decision to treat income taxes and assets not related to the business of distributing electricity as operating expenses.

Meralco filed another motion for reconsideration on April 15 after the Supreme Court's third division "denied with finality" on April 9 the power firm's motion for reconsideration to reverse the court's Nov. 15, 2002 refund order.

Second motion

The government top lawyer said Meralco could still file another motion seeking to reverse the high court's refund order.

Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo said there was nothing in the rules of court that barred Meralco from filing a second motion for reconsideration.

Benipayo, a former appellate court justice and Supreme Court administrator, said accepting the second motion was the discretion of the 15-member tribunal.

His stand was contrary to the pronouncement of Supreme Court spokesperson Ismael Khan who said Tuesday that the country's largest power distributor had no other option but to immediately abide by the refund order.

Khan said that the decision was final and executory, so Meralco could no longer file another motion for reconsideration.

He said the second motion would not be given "due course" by the high court.

Benipayo believed the prohibition on the filing of a second motion for reconsideration covered the appellate and trial courts but not the Supreme Court.

He, however, clarified that he was not siding with Meralco. He said that though he believed Meralco could still file another motion, it was unlikely that the Supreme Court would change its mind.

"Whatever arguments (Meralco presented in its latest motion), they were never sustained by the Supreme Court. And the decision is final. Eventually, (it will) have to refund," Benipayo said.

On Tuesday, President Macapagal-Arroyo said Meralco must comply with the court order but hinted her administration may be open to a settlement. She said Meralco "must find a way to meet its obligations to the public in line with the judicious use of its own means and resources."

Kid gloves

The umbrella group Anakpawis condemned Ms Macapagal for treating Meralco with kid gloves despite its being guilty of "national plunder and corporate exploitation."

"The President really loves the Lopez group (which controls Meralco). It is an open book to millions of Meralco consumers that the Lopez clan is one of the administration's most favored clients," Anakpawis vice chair Carmen Deunida said in a statement.

Joel Maglunsod, Kilusang Mayo Uno secretary general, said the steady expansion of the Lopez group of companies could have been an outcome of Meralco's overcharging. The Lopez group is also into telecommunications, broadcasting, water distribution and property development.

"No one in his right mind would believe that a profit-greedy company like Meralco would suffer losses if it gave back to customers what it had plundered," Maglunsod said.

A consumer group demanded that Meralco stop collecting the overcharge of 16.7 centavos per kWh.

"This should be a good start for Meralco to make amends for its crime," Alerto Mamimili spokesperson Lolita Donato said. "We need all the money we can save from our budget, especially now that the enrollment period is nearing."

GMA: Probe Mindoro murders

From page A1

while they were on a fact-finding mission looking into allegations of military abuses in Oriental Mindoro, their colleagues said.

The two were found dead the following morning in Barangay Alcadesma in Bansud town some 200 meters from the highway. The three others were found hogtied in Bongabong town.

Vigilantism

Ms Macapagal told the barangay watchers that vigilantism was a form of terrorism that they should also guard against.

But the victims' fellow activists are convinced that Marcellana and Gumanoy had been murdered, not by vigilantes, but by the military supposedly upon the orders of Col. Jovito Palparan, head of the Army's 204th Infantry Brigade.

They said the killings were meant to thwart investigation of allegations that troops had abused villagers and farmers in Mindoro. The military has denied committing such abuses and being behind the murders.

An official of Bayan Muna expressed reservations on the President's order to create a task force to look into the murders in Mindoro.

"The investigation must lead to the prosecution and punishment of Palparan and not to a political gimmick that would facilitate a cover-up," Robert de Castro, Bayan Muna deputy secretary general, said.

De Castro said the task force should investigate not only the abduction and killing of Marcellana and Gumanoy, but also the whole cases of involuntary disappearance and the series of murders of members of legitimate organizations in the province.

He challenged the President to prove her sincerity by immediately relieving Palparan while the cases were being investigated.

"Only by relieving the army official can witnesses and victims—including town mayors and local government officials—speak out in the open without fear of reprisal," he said.

De Castro said Marcellana, secretary general of Karapatan-Southern Tagalog, was scheduled to testify against Palparan at the Commission of Appointments to oppose Palparan's promotion to brigadier general.

"The brutal killing of Marcellana and Gumanoy came after Malacañang submitted Palparan's promotion to the CA. Palparan thinks he is beyond any reckoning of the law," De Castro said in a statement.

Promotion blocked

Bayan Muna, according to the statement, has filed a formal opposition before the CA in the hope of blocking Palparan's promotion.

Asked to comment, Palparan said he did not know that Bayan Muna was out to block his promotion. "As far as the human right abuses against my unit (were concerned), they have always made these allegations but they have not been able to present any proof," Palparan told defense reporters.

A group of environmentalists is offering another angle to the abduction and murder of human rights activists.

The Southern Tagalog Environmental Action Movement (Steam) said the proposed mining activities in Mindoro may have something to do with the murder abductions and killings on the island.

Dr. Jun Saturay, chair of Steam, said Marcellana and Gumanoy were prominent opponents of planned mining operations in Mindoro. Saturay said some multinational companies like the Canadian firm Crew Minerals Inc.—formerly MINDEX Inc.—had expressed interest in putting up mining facilities in the province.

Almost 20 percent of the province is being eyed as mining areas, according to Saturay.

He noted that many opponents of "bogus development projects" in Southern Tagalog were either harassed, kidnapped or killed by military and paramilitary units. He cited the killings of Erwin Bacarra, Emil Santillan, Oscar Sacdalan and couple Manuela and Expedito Albarillo, who were known anti-mining activists in Mindoro.

Revolutionary justice

Militant farmers demanded revolutionary justice for Gumanoy and Marcellana.

"Palparan and his criminal gang must be sentenced by the people's court due to his monstrous crimes against the peasantry and the people," said Danilo Ramos, secretary general of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

The people's court is the tribunal of the communist New People's Army (NPA).

Palparan denied the allegations that he had ordered the abduction and killing of the two leaders.

A KMP statement described Gumanoy, 38, as "a small coconut farmer" from Gen. Nakar town in Quezon Province. He was elected chair of Kasama-TK during its 5th Congress in November last year.

The remains of Gumanoy and Marcellana were to arrive yesterday afternoon at the Port of Sta. Clara in Batangas. A tribute and vigil were scheduled in Batangas City.

This morning, their remains will be brought to Manila by a funeral-caravan of Southern Tagalog farmers and will be welcomed by farmers from Central Luzon led by the KMP, Alyansang Magbubukid ng Gitnang Luzon and other activists in Metro Manila. *With reports from Martin P. Marfil and Gerald G. Lacuarta in Manila; and Marlon Ramos and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

PDI fotog scorned, shunned

From page A1

14, 2003.

I am on the afternoon shift but my boss, Ernie Sarmiento, said that I proceed immediately to the North Expressway in Bocaue, Bulacan. He had arranged for the INQUIRER driver to rendezvous with me in Bocaue as I live in the adjacent town of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. He said I had to transmit my photo before 5 p.m. of the same day.

Upon reaching Bayambang, a town away from Alcala, I called up our correspondent, Yolanda Fuertes, to ask for directions. She told me she had already left Alcala as people were getting angry at her and other members of the media who suddenly descended on their barrio.

I proceeded to Barangay Vacante where I saw residents in a waiting shed; some were wearing masks others not. I took some pictures, then went to the Barangay Health Center. There were no personnel around. I saw a woman and asked where the Health personnel were. She sarcastically answered "*Nagtotong-its sila,*" she said. (They're playing cards.) I later learned that they were mad at the personnel of the Department of Health for isolating three zones in their village.

Agitated

I asked a woman how I could get to the residence of Adela Catalon. That was when she became agitated and she replied *"Paano nyong nasiguro na SARS nga ang pumatay sa kanya?"* (How are you sure that SARS killed her?). She then whispered something to the man behind her while looking at me sharply. I sensed trouble so I asked Romy Tamanu, our driver to back off and just return to the waiting shed.

I noticed that not all were wearing masks, and a woman said that the masks were from the health center but there was not enough for everyone. She related to me their situation, "They don't allow us out of the barrio," she said referring to the health personnel. "They just bring food to us." After taking more pictures, I decided it was time to transmit my photos to our Makati office.

Shunned

I went back to Bayambang to look for a telephone calling station. There was no available line, so I proceeded to Camiling, Tarlac. I entered an establishment with a sign "International Calling Station" outside. I asked the lady owner to allow me to use a direct line as my laptop was programmed to connect to our company modem through a direct line.

As I was preparing my laptop, about 10 personnel of the calling station were curious about the gadget I just brought in. They milled around me to look at the pictures. But as soon as I opened the first pictures that I took—those of the residents of Barangay Vacante wearing masks, they immediately backed off. "You came from Alcala, why didn't you say so right away?" the irked owner told me in Filipino.

Addressing her personnel, she said to them, "Don't go near him. You might get infected." They all scattered away from me.

Go away

They were so alarmed that the owner asked me to leave immediately. "Go away. You might contaminate our things here. Clean up the things you touched here," she said in Filipino.

After a while a burly man approached me and ordered me to leave immediately and look for another calling station. Thinking of my boss' order for me to beat the deadline, I sought the assistance of a police officer to help me find an establishment where I could transmit the Alcala pictures. Fortunately, we found one. But I made sure not to let anyone in that place see the pictures I was sending back to the office.

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2. Visit our website at www.engagephilippines.com to fill out a form and register their company online. Registration deadline is Friday, May 2, 2003.

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CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDER

Pyramid 'queen' suffers yet another legal blow

By Michael Lim Ubac

PYRAMID scam "queen" Rosario Baladjay was dealt yet another legal blow, this time by the Court of Appeals, which junked her petition seeking to nullify adverse orders issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In a 12-page decision promulgated this week, the appellate court's 11th division ruled that the SEC did not, as the petition claimed, commit grave abuse of discretion when it issued two cease-and-desist orders stopping Baladjay's Multinational Telecom Investors Corp. (Multitel) from further collecting investments from the public.

The CA ruling came in the heels of a Supreme Court order extending the freeze orders on all bank accounts and financial assets of Multitel and other pseudo-investment firms involved in similar scams. The freeze orders cover some P1.08 billion in bank accounts and assets belonging to Multitel, Japanese businessman Genta Ogami, and the Abu Sayyaf Group, among others.

Baladjay, president of Multitel, is currently detained at the Makati City Jail for a host of estafa and syndicated swindling charges filed in connection with a P10 billion pyramid scam. Other criminal cases against her are pending with the justice department and regional trial courts in Pasig City and Pangasinan.

The CA decision dated March 31 was written by Associate Justice Bienvenido Reyes and concurred in by Associate Justices Salvador Valdez Jr. and Danilo Pine.

In the ruling, the CA explained that Baladjay's petition had failed when tested against "stringent requisites," namely: "Abuse of discretion must be so grave, as when the power is exercised in an arbitrary or despotic manner by reason of passion or personal hostility; and it must be so patent as to amount to an evasion of positive duty or to a virtual refusal to perform the duty enjoined."

The petition stemmed from a cease-and-desist order (CDO) issued by the SEC on Aug. 4, 2000 on Multitel, after an audit revealed that the firm had 238 investors with an aggregate exposure of P11.7 million.

But on June 19, 2001, after Multitel paid up fines imposed by the commission, the SEC en banc lifted the CDO.

The SEC's Inspection and Surveillance Division then examined Multitel's book of accounts and financial records, as well as the books and records of three of its investors—the Everflow Group of Companies Inc., Partners in Progress Holdings Inc. and Sage Management Corp. Besides these three firms, Multitel has nine other listed investors.

It was discovered that all 12 investors accepted investments from, and for the account of, individual clients to whom they issued receipts as evidence of indebtedness. They remitted the collections to Multitel, which then issued postdated checks directly to the individual investors.

However, SEC also discovered that Multitel and its partners engaged in deposit-taking "without license from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and despite (the) absence of such purpose under their respective Articles of Incorporation."

Thus, on Jan. 15, 2002, the SEC issued a second CDO, which was declared permanent 10 days later. This meant that Multitel and its partner firms were forever barred from further accepting investments from the public.

A reconsideration sought by Multitel was denied by the SEC on March 5, 2002. Aggrieved, Multitel elevated the matter to the CA.

With its decision a full year later, the CA sided with the SEC which, it said, was empowered to issue the CDO to "protect the investing public." It also stressed that the main issue was not the CDO, but the violations committed by Multitel in its operations.

GOZUN: Debt for nature swap

Germany condones P82M in debt deal

GERMANY has cancelled about P82.5 million of the Philippines' P371 million debt after a debt-for-nature swap proved successful in a Quirino province conservation project.

In a communique to the Philippine government, Germany's Financial Cooperation Agency (Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau or KfW) formally cancelled DM 3,832,512 of the country's debt, including interest accrued, after it learned of the success of the RP-German Community Forestry Project-Quirino (CFPQ).

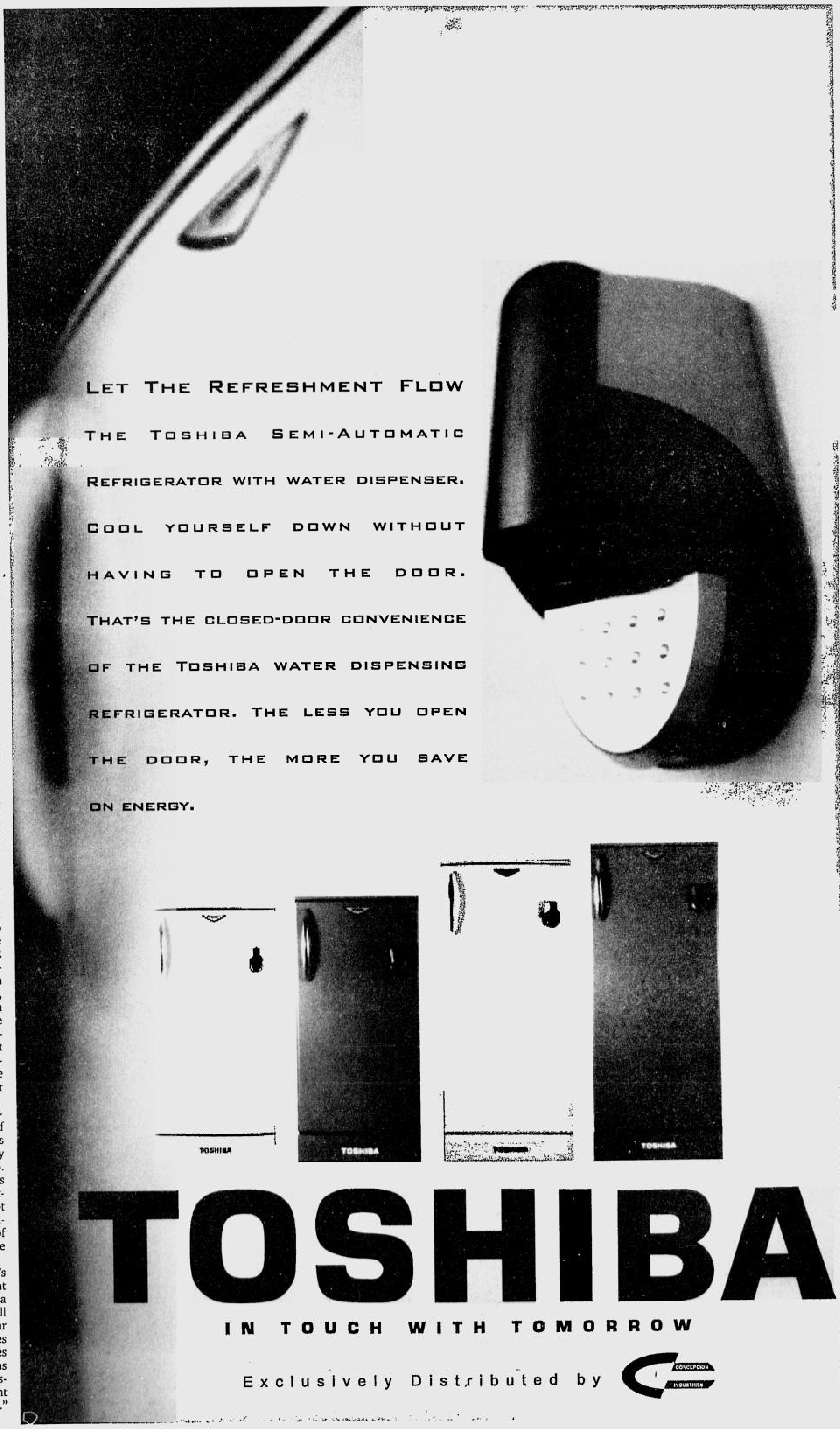
The project implemented between July 1999 and March 2003 in 10 barangays in the towns of Maddela, Nagtipunan, Aglipay and Diffun included reforestation and conservation programs and the sustainable use of natural resources with emphasis on bio-diversity by the local communities.

The four-year project resulted in the planting of gmelina, mahogany and narra seedlings on 1,487.66 hectares of land; the establishment of 982 hectares of agro-forestry farms with fruit-bearing trees, and the construction of 10 multi-purpose buildings, 22 kilometers of farm-to-market roads, 26.55 km of access roads and five dams or small water impounding systems.

The debt cancellation was a result of two agreements signed with Germany in 1992 and 1996. The agreements called for the writing-off of the debt through the utilization of 30 percent of the debt to fund the Quirino project.

With the program's success, Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun said: "We will try to look into similar debt swap schemes with other countries to reduce our debt, as well as ensure sustainable management of the environment."

Gerald G. Lacuarta



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Sick economies

EDITORIAL

DEATHS from SARS continue to rise. Even as the war in Iraq wound down, the SARS epidemic has grabbed the headlines and compounded economic uncertainty in the international markets.

In China, the epicenter of the epidemic, SARS has already killed 95 people (a number that is probably understated) and infected 2,158. It has killed 235 people and infected 4,100 in at least 30 countries. Two probable deaths from SARS have been reported in the Philippines, and an equal number in Malaysia. The toll in Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand is rising. Although most of the victims have been in Asia, SARS is more than an Asian flu; Canada, in North America, has a number of victims.

Despite the frantic search for a cure to this killer-disease, no vaccine has been found to check it, and it is likely that the epidemic will spread and claim more lives in more countries before a way is found to stop it. Devices for detection of infection have been put in place in many countries where infection is suspected, but that's a distance away from a cure. The virus has not even been positively identified.

Medical authorities say that the disease does not spread very quickly and is not even highly contagious. Most experts say that SARS is highly unlikely to escalate into a pandemic like the Spanish flu, which killed 25 million worldwide between 1918 and 1920.

One hopes they are right, but in the meantime the SARS epidemic has already inflicted a heavy economic toll since it was first detected last November. Its economic impact on growth is approaching that of the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

Travel, tourism, retailing as well as the food and entertainment industries have been badly hit. Cathay Pacific has slashed its flights by 50 percent, and airlines flying into and out of Asia have counted many empty seats. Hong Kong, the shopping center of Asia, presents a macabre picture of deserted shops and restaurants. People in Singapore, Hong Kong and even Manila have taken to wearing clinical masks. This prompted one Hong Kong observer to say, "How can you enjoy a meal when the waiters are tiptoeing around in mask? It's like going to a morgue. If this continues for very long, we're going to see mass bankruptcies."

Economists have begun slashing growth estimates for Asian economies hardest hit by SARS. Morgan Stanley has revised its gross domestic forecasts for 2003 in Asia based on expectations that SARS will cut into retail and reduce tourism. It cut GDP forecast for East Asia, excluding Japan, to 4.5 percent, from 5.1 percent; China, from 7 percent to 6.5 percent; Hong Kong, from 2.7 percent to 2.1 percent; and Taiwan, from 2.8 percent to 2.3 percent. Economists say that Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan could easily go into recession, adding that "this could be the worst thing since the Asian financial crisis."

Afflicted countries have to make do with the obvious countermeasures: tightening of quarantine measures at airports and centers suspected as infected areas. With more citizens wearing masks, and if the infection does not run its course soon, we could be seeing a grotesque landscape where more people are wearing masks than soldiers wearing anti-chemical and germ gear in the invasion of Iraq.

The fact that China has underreported the severity of the epidemic is only part of the problem. Governments tend to underplay the health menace in order not to panic their populations, but of all the responses to this health crisis, concealing it is the worst approach.

The most important and critical effort now is to find an effective way to combat the disease and check its spread. Quarantine measures are important, and this inconvenience is something that we have to bear until an antidote is found. Such precautions will probably help minimize the spread of infection. But our best hope lies in the frenzied search for a cure in many of the world's medical laboratories.

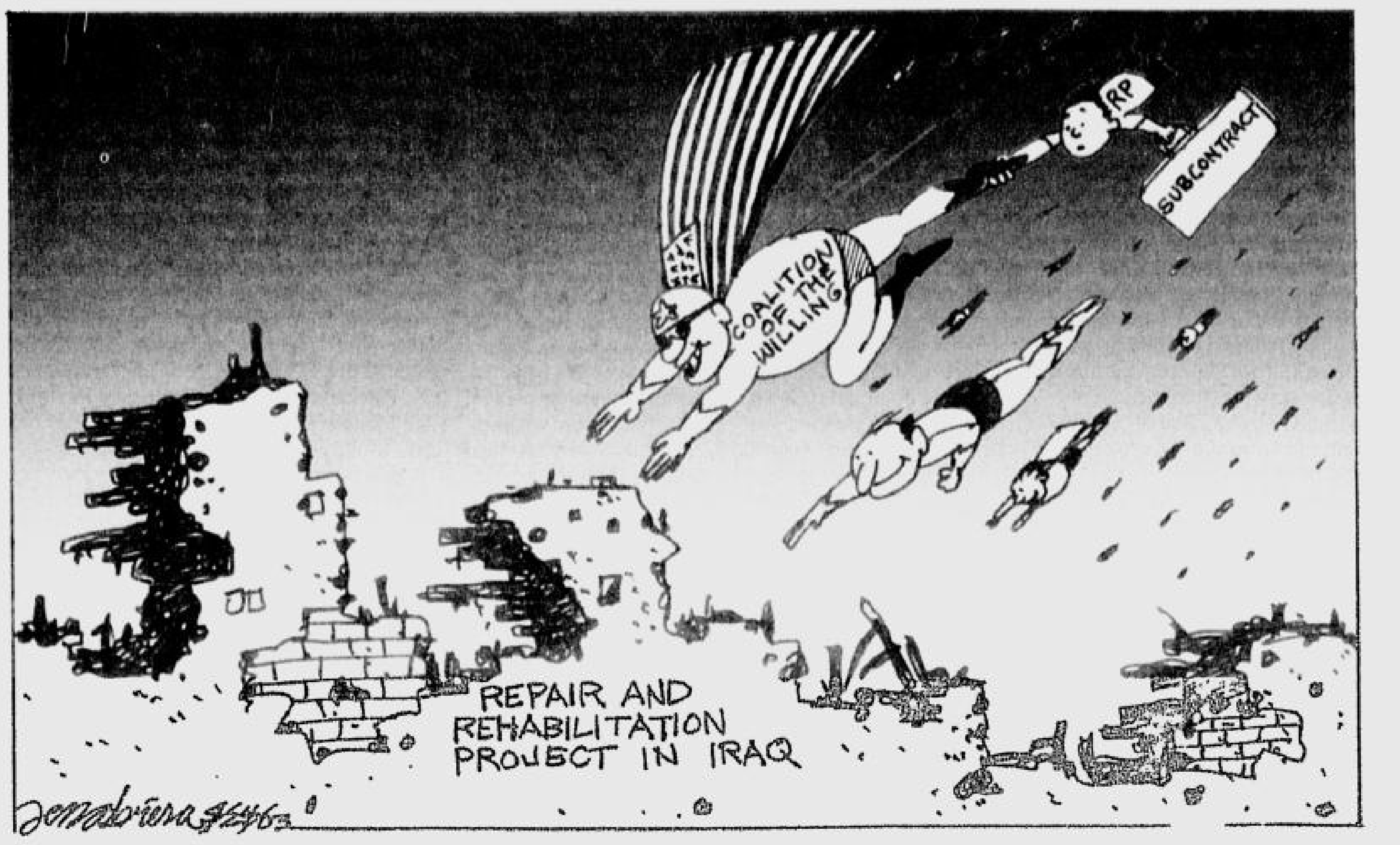
Pressure on Israel

FOREIGN COMMENT

IF the peace process is to get started in the Middle East, the international pressure on Israel must become much stronger. Britain and the European Union have tried to put the issue on the agenda. But the key to success is to be found in Washington.

The Americans could force Israel to make concessions. But if so, US President George W. Bush must realize that the Israeli occupation is a decisive engine behind both political instability and terrorism.

Aftonbladet (Stockholm, Sweden)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The resurrection of the Balara Filters

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

SUMMER means going on picnics, outings and excursions to faraway places. The last is the most popular for people both in urban and rural areas. It consists of each individual paying a fee to join the excursion, hiring buses, and members of a class or school or community piling into buses with their *baon* and then motoring to Enchanted Kingdom in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, the Philippine equivalent of Disneyland, to Baguio or to some beach resort.

In the 1950s and 1960s, an excursion was invariably a trip to Hinulugang Taktak in Antipolo, Tagaytay, Matabungkay in Batangas—or to the Balara Filters in Quezon City. Even people in Manila, or any of its suburbs, hired buses for an excursion to Balara. As students, when there were no classes or we just wanted to play hooky, my *barkada* used to go to Balara to swim. It was as popular as diving from the rocks of the breakwater of Luneta into Manila Bay, which was still clean at that time.

People liked Balara because they were sure its waters were clean, being the filtration plant of the water supply to Manila. Its main attraction were the swimming pools: a big one for adults with diving boards on different levels, and a small one for children. Beside them were pavilions, which excursionists rented exclusively for their members, there to dance to recorded music.

There were wooded areas and other attractions around the swimming pools and pavilions (Balara is 60 hectares in all). From the swimming pools, you walked to the picnic areas through a road overlooking the aeration lagoon where plumes of water spouted from huge pipes to be aerated. In the bright sunlight, the umbrella-like fountains turned into miniature rainbows.

In the picnic area, there were picnic tables and benches where you could eat your *baon*. Among them were two tall water towers.

There were many other attractions: a chapel, miniature castles, topiaries of Don Quixote, Sancho Panza and their horses, an amphitheater, a miniature Jerusalem, etc. but most of the excursionists congregated in and around the swimming pools and pavilions.

For some reason, the National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority quietly closed the pools, pavilions and other attractions to excursionists. It has never been fully explained why. Was it because it was losing money on the operation although it must have been collecting plenty from the entrance fees? And so for many years, excursionists were deprived of one favorite destination, while residents of the park-deficient Metro Manila lost a place to cool off during summer.

Happily, Manila Water, the private concessionaire for half of Metro Manila, is resurrecting Balara Filters for the enjoyment of the public. In fact, it is inaugurating the rehabilitated Balara Filters tomorrow, which is very timely as it is just a few days after Easter. It would have been even better had it been opened to the public during Holy Week to provide the people who wisely didn't go to faraway resorts and stayed home in Metro Manila, an alternative destination in the metropolis.

After tomorrow, Balara will again be an excursion destination. I understand that the vast La Mesa Dam watershed will be rehabilitated next. Bless Manila Watershed for that. The teeming metropolis is acutely short of parks.

* * *

Here's an update on the traffic situation at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Tandang Sora in Quezon City.

Drivers and commuters there are the most unruly in the world and the policemen with headquarters in the nearby air-conditioned Police Community Precinct, under the flyover, are either blind as bats or are among the laziest in the world. Even when drivers and commuters are violating the laws with impunity, even with huge signs saying that loading and unloading are prohibited at the corner and pointing to the proper waiting area where the government built waiting sheds for the commuters, not one of the policemen in the precinct bothers to arrest the violating drivers or tells the commuters where to wait for their rides.

Well, after I wrote that column, they put steel railings and roped off the two outer lanes to guide the drivers and commuters toward the waiting shed. But the railings stopped 75 steps (I counted them) short of the waiting shed. So the commuters still wait for their ride in the middle of the street, beyond the railings, and jeepneys and buses stop for them there, and continue to block traffic up to the corner.

I saw one *barangay tanod* vainly trying to wave the jeepneys forward but the jeepney drivers were blind and they didn't see him. They had eyes only for the potential passengers. And no policemen from the community precinct bothered to help him. The President should really make a surprise visit to this precinct.

Is it too difficult to assign at least two policemen, one on each side of Commonwealth, to arrest erring drivers, direct commuters to where they can wait for their ride and arrest jaywalkers? They will not learn to obey the law if they are not arrested for violating it.

I understand that a deputy of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando is in charge of the traffic on Commonwealth. If this is the situation in a street he personally supervises, I wonder how the situation is in other streets.

And what is that community police precinct for?

Then and now

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LAST week, I reread Daniel Boone Schirmer's "Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War." The inspiration for it came from news that the Iraq war was over and the United States was in the thick of preparations to run the country. It struck me that except for some modifications, this must have been how it felt more than a hundred years ago when the United States seized Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. The events followed the same pattern. The rhetoric was the same. The reality, which was an outright land-grab, was the same. Three years into the new millennium, we had a ringside seat to 19th century colonialism.

Of course the whole thing struck Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo differently. She has hailed the subsequent departure of American troops as a sign that George W. Bush's splendid little war was meant to liberate rather than occupy. Well, it's not just her sense of the past that's a little shaky, it's her sense of the present as well. She forgot that Bush had just appointed a retired general, Jay Garner, to serve pretty much as governor general of the new colony. Indeed, she forgot that as the troops were moving out of Iraq, the businesses allied with the White House, which had pushed for the war from the start, were moving in.

Going through Schirmer's book again gave me goose pimples. The parallels were incredible. The differences consisted only of nuances.

For example, the people who wanted to go to war with Spain were a little more forthright about their intentions, which was that the United States would profit from it. That was the point Henry Cabot Lodge hammered on, to overcome the idea of republicanism which those opposed to the war said reflected the true American spirit. "From a purely business viewpoint," Lodge said, "business would not suffer from a war with Spain. On the contrary our mills would make more goods, our railroads would carry more freight, but these are the things that constitute business and not the stock market prices."

Richard Perle, who manages Trireme, a military technology company and who lobbies for Global Crossing, a telecommunications giant, while serving as head of the Defense Intelligence Board, might have said the same thing: "Our factories would make (and sell) more arms, our oil companies may own more wells."

The hawks of the time justified the war against Spain before the world also as freeing an enslaved people. They did not bother to suggest that Spain posed a threat to US security, possessing as it did a fleet of tugboats capable of mass destruction. It would have been laughable. Bush and Donald Rumsfeld had more gall there, not particularly minding the incredulity of the world, an incredulity later proved beyond a shadow of doubt. Then, President William McKinley was lauded by his supporters as having bested even Lincoln in the emancipation department: Lincoln had only freed 4 million human beings while McKinley had "lifted 10 million into light and freedom"! In McKinley's sorties to rally support for his war, huge portraits of Washington, Lincoln and him hung above the loudspeakers with the word, "Liberators!"

Aware that the United States wanted war with it, Spain held negotiations with Washington and made all sorts of concessions to appease it. At one point, it agreed to allow the United States to feed Cubans who were suffering from the effects of reconcentration. The hawks became alarmed that this might dampen public enthusiasm for the war and make McKinley a little more reluctant to prosecute it. They held a meeting at the end of which they resolved to warn the president not to "back down."

The theme of not backing down before Saddam Hussein's apparent uncooperativeness and deceitfulness is everywhere in the utterances of Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, Tony Blair and George Bush before they went to war.

There was the yellow press in McKinley's time in lieu of embedded journalists. Randolph Hearst was the prime exponent of it, the fellow who, when the photographer he sent to Cuba sent a cable saying nothing much was happening there, cabled back to say: "You supply the pictures, I'll supply the war." The yellow press was as instrumental as the troops in getting a nation steeped in a libertarian tradition to choose empire over republic.

There were exceptions, in the form of the non-embedded journalists of the time. The Philadelphia Ledger carried this dispatch from its correspondent in Manila:

"The present war is no bloodless, fake, opera bouffé engagement; our men have been relentless, have killed to exterminate men, women, children, prisoners and captives, active insurgents and suspected people from lads of 10 up, an idea prevailing that the Filipino as such was little better than a dog…Our soldiers have pumped salt water into men to 'make them talk' and have taken prisoners, people who held up their hands and peacefully surrendered, and an hour later, without an atom of evidence to show that they were even insurrectos, stood them on the bridge and shot them down one by one…."

From the Iraqi side, it was much the same as the Filipinos of yesterday. It did not greatly matter that their children were killed by an unseen enemy rather than a seen one. They were just as dead.

Today, the theme is building democracy in a country that never asked for it. What arose in the Philippines then was the Commonwealth, a restricted form of self-rule which came only close to four decades after the United States seized these islands. It is a testament to how free this country has become that many of its citizens long to go back to it, or turn this country into another state of America.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Senators shouldn't miss out on history

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

REPORTS said Sen. Edgardo Angara and Rep. Eduardo Nachura, who head the committee on constitutional amendments and electoral reforms in their respective chambers, have agreed to meet this week to discuss ways of resolving the congressional deadlock over Charter change. This move is said to be supported by Senators Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Robert Barbers. Despite the current deadlock, however, one can feel that the Charter change campaign is definitely moving. All this is part of our political history. Thus, if the senators don't want to miss out, they have to get into the act. For instance, in the pipeline is a move among various sectors supporting Charter change to draw up a social contract that will set the parameters for the three amendments to the Constitution. By doing so, they aim to avoid any hint of self-interest among the members of the constituent assembly.

* * *

But even as leaders of Congress look for ways to agree on Charter change, the presidential aspirants seem to be campaigning early. Raul Roco is all over the country delivering commencement speeches. Despite his disavowal of ambition, streamers proclaiming a "Danding Cojuangco for President Movement" have sprouted in Tarlac and Pangasinan. Loren Legarda, buoyed up by her topping the senatorial survey, says her eyes are definitely on either of the two top posts, while Juan Flavier has posted, true to form, tiny posters to remind people that he could be a choice too. Panfilo Lacson is now preparing for his second TV ad.

* * *

Cebu Rep. Nerissa Soon-Ruiz has called on President Macapagal-Arroyo not to attend the April 29 summit of Asean heads of state in Bangkok to map out various strategies to combat SARS. Soon-Ruiz argues that GMA would be placing herself in direct danger of contracting SARS by traveling there.

I agree that the President's prime obligation is to conserve her health for the heavy duties of state, beginning with dealing with the SARS threat. In fact I consider that political summit of Asean heads of state on SARS reckless, particularly since there is nothing that their health ministers cannot accomplish with their support. In fact, the Asean ministers will already be meeting days earlier in Kuala Lumpur, so why that summit?

But then, perhaps the President feels that the urgency of this scourge calls for nothing less than a meeting with her counterparts for better coordination. We can only wish her a SARS-safe trip.

* * *

Earlier I wrote about the move of the camp of Sen. Panfilo Lacson to recruit to his defense panel a very good friend of Supreme Court Justice Romeo Callejo, the ponente of the April 1 decision ordering the QC regional trial court to reopen the Kuratong Baleleng case. The idea apparently is to disqualify or recuse Callejo in the coming SC voting on Lacson's motion for reconsideration, another trick of the trade in the legal profession. The new counsel of Lacson is Felix Carao Jr. of the Saguisag & Carao law firm. Carao, who signed Lacson's motion for reconsideration, is not only a very good friend of Callejo's, but also his classmate at the San Beda College of Law as well as his *compadre* (Callejo is the *ninong* of Carao's child in baptism). Interestingly, while the justices were in Baguio before the Holy Week, another law classmate, a close friend of Carao's, attempted to see the justice but the latter refused to receive him.

* * *

The ploy to disqualify Callejo may not work as there is a standing SC policy which provides that after a decision has been issued, its ponente can no longer be recused or allowed to recuse himself. This was evident in the recent SC decision on the Meralco case ordering the utility firm to reimburse consumers for its over-billings, when the Court en banc did not allow ponente Justice Reynato Puno to recuse himself after his cousin, Justice Ricardo C. Puno, filed and signed Meralco's motion for reconsideration. Previously Reynato Puno would have invariably recused himself in cases where the law firm of Ricardo Puno served as counsel for one party, but because of this new SC policy this is no longer necessary.

* * *

Judging from the way people are getting involved, the revival of the Kuratong Baleleng case promises to be a truly celebrated case. Bantay Katarungan, a militant citizens' group monitoring justice and human rights issues founded by Jovito Salonga and Sedfrey Ordoñez, and composed of law students from four leading law schools, has promised to monitor the trial closely. Another newly formed group, composed of Ateneo law students, will also conduct a KB watch. Quezon City Judge Ma. Theresa Yadao knows that her decisions in the KB case will be closely watched.

* * *

Like everybody else, I have been following keenly the accusations of corruption and influence-peddling leveled by former presidential adviser Dante Ang against the Villaraza Angangco law office. It is interesting that Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye has been the one emphasizing the Palace's cordial relations with Ang, obviously in an attempt to contain this PR crisis, while nothing has been heard from the law office. The accusations have been leveled at its top guns and not at the First Couple.

* * *

The UP High School class of 1948 will hold its 55th anniversary reunion on Saturday, April 26, starting 9 a.m. at the UP Executive House in Diliman, Quezon City. Among the prominent members of this class are conductor and violinist Oscar Yatco, Urban Planning Prof. Lita Velmonte, Prof. Raul Ingles and Cary Bernardo Reyes, a well-known lecturer on family values. For details contact Ms Reyes at 725-6440.

Girl on a pedestal

YOUNG BLOOD

Thea Panes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

FROM ONE fight to another, from one kind deed to another, I always found a reason to stay—and to keep on believing. But now after the last few drops of tears have dried, I have finally found my place. Out of his life.

I've always tried to help friends get through their romantic dilemmas by asking them, "Is it worth it?" Now I am haunted by the same question and my very active mind can come up with only two words: It was. I've come to terms with the fact that this is my stop. This is where I get off. This is when I cut the rope.

I will always have very fond memories of Ryan, and the man he almost was. I can recall the few big fights and the not-so-interesting disputes we had, but I choose to remember with a smile the four years we were close to each other.

There was always a reason to keep the relationship, the friendship that forever was just that, friendship. There was more than one attempt to take it to another level, but always I found myself where I had left off: the girlfriend substitute; the meantime girl. Always almost, but not quite.

Now I find myself running out of reasons. I have come face to face with the reality that he was never the best friend that I was to him all along. It was just a label, a term I could use to describe what he was to me and what we had for each other. I wanted more. And it took me this long to finally realize that I could not have what I wanted. Not with Ryan. So what's the point of settling for mere friendship?

I always advise my friends, "Know what you want and stick to it." I have always known what I wanted, but unfortunately, he didn't want me the same way.

Once again, I am going through this tug-of-war over what I want and what I deserve, and I know I deserve more. After my true feelings surfaced, I began to acknowledge the fact that I was fixated on his looks. The rest was just part of the illusion I had created in my mind, just like the reasons that were not supposed to be there.

Painful, yes, but still bearable. When you have finally run out of answers and all that's comforting you are mere possibilities, won't you get tired, too? I always ask; I never assume.

If there was any beauty in our relationship, it was that we were conscious about telling the truth, no matter how silly, foolish or painful. All along he was telling me that I was just a friend. Some of his actions seemed to say otherwise, but that, was, of course, to someone who chose to see more. He would tell our friends that I was the ideal, or that if ever he would get into a serious relationship, it would have to be with someone of my caliber or better. So there I was again, the girl on a pedestal, but never in his arms.

Despite all this, I stayed on, hoping that I would in time be able to serve my purpose even as his friend, not necessarily his best friend, just a friend. Why? Because I found fulfillment in making him know the man that he was to me. Because we were both convenient. There were good and bad reasons, but after all that was said and done, it was because I was happy most of all. Then I would wake up one morning, not feeling the same way anymore, less hopeful but more certain that I wanted more.

I have given it enough time—for us to grow, for us to be the better persons that we are now. I would like to think that I gave it enough chance already. I would like to believe that someday when our paths cross again, we will see each other in the arms of people who deserve us best, who are willing to love us more than we did each other, people who are meant to be "chosen" and not someone we had to settle for.

I have given it my best—all I have got, in fact—and I can only give so much. The same with Ryan. If it were right, I wouldn't be trying so hard.

Now I have reached this decision, the decision to say enough. And when you say enough, you have to mean it's over.

It has been a struggle. In my heart, though, I know that I will be okay. I have to be. My best friend, whom I visit during lunch breaks at the nearest church, reminds me that the shortest distance between my struggle and relief is as short as the distance between my knees and the floor.

Funny how when we were all little, we could not wait for the day when we would finally grow up and fall in love—only to realize that it was so much easier to deal with scarred knees than broken hearts. When my "sister" told me this, I realized that I was no longer a little girl. I have scarred my knees more than once and had my heart broken twice. But I am still looking forward to the falling and rising, and everything in between.

Thea Panes, 26, works as a travel specialist for an airline and writes to make things bearable.

Hope from an ancient plague

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

YOU all remember the game "Ring a ring of roses," in which children either stand or sit in a circle while chanting the rhyme

Ring a ring of roses
A pocketful of posies
A-tishoo!, a-tishoo!
We all fall down.

When they say the final line, all the children then fall back together.

Scholars say the game and the rhyme is actually a remnant of one of the most devastating periods in the history of Europe and maybe even of humanity. In the 1300s, a deadly disease spread through China (believed to have originated in the Gobi Desert), then reached Europe about a decade later through infected sailors aboard trading ships. Known as the Bubonic Plague, for the appearance of lumps which grew to the size of an egg or apple in the neck or groin, also called "buboes," the disease was more commonly called the "Black Death," because blood hemorrhaging internally eventually turned black and caused the victim's body to darken just before death.

The rhyme evokes the horrors of the disease, beginning with the rash around the neck, known as "roseola," that signals infection. The "pocketful of posies" refers to the practice of placing fragrant blossoms on the clothes of the afflicted because as the disease progresses, victims begin exuding a "horrible body stench." And "a-tishoo!, a-tishoo!"? This refers to one of the most common ways the disease was spread, with anybody coming in contact with the victim almost certainly falling ill as well and dying, which "all fall down" connotes.

Macabre, maybe, but language experts say rhymes about tragedies, especially on the scale of the "Black Death," is one way by which young minds seek to grasp events too terrible to imagine.

* * *

FIVE years after first arriving on European shores, the Bubonic Plague had left 25 million dead, about one-third of Europe's population at the time. The disease would seem to disappear in winter, only to come back in the spring. And though the worst of the pestilence tapered off at the end of the 14th century, it did not entirely disappear until the 1600s.

The Black Death's depredations on the individual were so swift that Boccacio, writing in the "Decameron," was moved to comment that victims "ate lunch with their friends and had dinner with their ancestors in paradise." It spread viciously and with such inexorable speed, afflicting entire families and communities, rich and poor alike. At the height of the epidemic, 500 people were dying each day in Pisa and Vienna; in Paris, there were 800 deaths a day, with the disease soon wiping out half of the city's population of 100,000. Some 100,000 people died of the plague in Florence in just four months, and in many European cities and towns, the disease killed as many as 80-90 percent of the population.

Structures of society were upended by the disease. Families turned away or abandoned relatives suspected of harboring the disease, doctors refused to open their doors to patients, and even priests refused to give the last sacrament.

The Bubonic Plague not only wiped out a third of Europe's population (and an unknown number in China, the Middle East and the rest of Asia), it also had far-reaching consequences on the world economy, the social order and even religion.

Initially, it led to widespread panic and persecution. Jews and lepers came under suspicion and ultimately banishment and slaughter, suspected of somehow introducing or spreading the disease. An order of fanatics, known as the Flagellants, believing the plague was God's punishment on an ungrateful populace, organized processions led by a group of their robed leaders, lashing themselves with whips. The processions, participated in by as many as 2,000 at a time, only helped spread the disease even farther. As the plague persisted for decades, people began to question their faith in God's benevolence, leading to the Reformation.

After the worst of the plague, Europe was so underpopulated that serious labor shortages ensued, forcing a transformation of the agriculture-based economy into production modes that demanded less brute power. It's believed the Renaissance, with its emphasis on human achievement and learning, could not have been possible without the radical rethinking occasioned by the Black Death.

* * *

SCIENTISTS have since determined that the plague was caused by bacteria that infested rats and were transmitted to humans by fleas that fed on the rats and then bit humans. The disease retreated in winter only because the fleas were dormant in cold weather.

The epidemic was brought to a halt with strict quarantines and the enforcement of more hygienic practices, that, unknown to public health authorities, indirectly led to reduced rat infestations and the disappearance of the disease.

One episode of "Secrets of the Dead" on PBS tells the strange story of an English town called Eyam. The plague came to the town in 1665 after a tailor received a bolt of cloth from London that was infested with fleas. In a month, five residents had already died and as a consequence all of Eyam was placed under quarantine. When authorities visited the town some months later, they expected to find a ghost town but discovered instead the majority of residents hale and hearty. Were the inhabitants of Eyam immune from the plague?

It turns out that they were. A subsequent study by geneticists on direct descendants of the plague survivors of Eyam uncovered the existence of a resistant gene that may hold the key to survival of those living with currently "incurable" viral diseases like HIV/AIDS and even the much-dreaded SARS.

Von's W.A.R.

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

LAST week, a Filipino received the Goldman Environmental Prize, often called the Nobel Prize of the environmental movement. The prize included a statuette and a whopping $125,000 for each winner.

Von Hernandez, 36, the winner from Asia, was one of six from different regions of the world. Just as important as the awards are the opportunities and the opening of doors for the winners and the causes they espouse. Von will attend a series of high-level meetings with members of the US Congress, senior World Bank officials and public policy leaders. He will take this chance to ask US officials to face up to their responsibility to victims and to clean up toxic sites in the former US military bases.

I spoke with Von before he left for the United States to receive his prize. Von, by the way, did not know that he had been nominated. I've known him in connection with his work at Greenpeace International. The Goldman Prize, however, is not directly connected with his current employment at Greenpeace as Asia Toxics Campaigner but with his track record in advocacy work against waste incineration that led to the Philippines' becoming the first country in the world to ban incineration nationwide.

The W.A.R. in the title above I borrowed from a treatise Von wrote on Waste and Recycling (WAR).

Von wears several hats of the same color. He is active in the Eco-Waste Coalition and its "Zero Waste" campaign. He is the chair of the People's Task Force for Bases Clean-Up. He is also the co-coordinator of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA). Von's efforts to expose the high cost and the serious health hazards that come with garbage incineration have not fallen on deaf ears. But the battle is far from over.

Incinerator pushers are back despite the passage of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act and the incineration ban in the Clean Air Act. Leading the pushers, Von said, is Jancom Environmental Corp. which has been promoting its so-called materials recovery facilities and waste-to-energy plan as a lasting solution to garbage woes.

Von's work is a mix of activities ranging from planning and working with communities threatened with toxic pollution, field investigations, local and international coalition building, to lobbying in government agencies, coordinating action such as protests, and media work. He is also a doting husband and father.

Before joining Greenpeace, Von worked as legislative division head in Sen. Orly Mercado's office. His experience in legislation later helped in the campaign for the passage of the Clean Air Act and Solid Waste Management Act.

It has not been easy. Von has been threatened with libel suits, and he has been ridiculed in the media by those who wanted the incineration ban lifted. Some even blamed Von for the garbage crisis.

Where is Asia with respect to the proliferation of incinerators? Von said that counting Japan, Asia would easily be the region with the most number of incinerators. Japan has thousands, which explains why it has the highest dioxin emissions worldwide, a consequence of its mindless burning policy.

Poison is not just in the smoke emissions that go up to the sky. Fire does not destroy everything. Ash residues contain lethal toxins that could ruin the ground and the bodies of water where living things grow.

In the last decade, Von pointed out, there has been large-scale migration of waste incinerators from the North and from Japan into the rest of Asia. There has been increasing public opposition to incinerators in industrialized countries. The incinerator makers are looking for new major markets where environmental regulations are weak, if not absent.

Like hazardous wastes, Von said, dirty technologies tend to follow the path of least resistance. He cautioned that with some PR, the incinerator industry could repackage obsolete incinerators as modern, non-polluting technologies.

Prior to the ban, there were incinerators in the Philippines, mostly small, old units in hospitals. Then proposals to build town incinerators came. At least 10 were documented in 1998. These were for places that were economically and politically powerless to resist them.

But where are we? Waste management plans seem dead in their tracks while garbage is generated day after day after day. Go to a mall and think of all its contents becoming garbage in no time. Where should all these go?

Von would rather put the bulk of the investment in "educating and organizing communities around the front-end strategies of waste segregation, composting and recycling, rather than relying on quick fixes and expensive technologies."

The "front-end" approach stresses individual and collective responsibility for the waste in one's own locality, instead of the "out of sight, out of mind" mind-set in the traditional collection system. The front-end approach is superior, Von said, pointing out the greater economic benefits for communities (more jobs), instead of money drained for the multinationals.

Resources are recycled and brought back into the economy. Composting of organic wastes is a must. The potential value of this smelly stuff for agriculture is tremendous.

Sweeping changes will not come overnight but if environment-friendly strategies are implemented now, if the Philippines starts moving away from landfills and dumpsites now, a cleaner environment is not too far away.

It's hard to believe but it can be done. I am a believer and practitioner of "zero waste." I have a compost pit that gives me fertilizer. I now know where to sell my empty ink cartridges. Now, who would like to take back my toxic batteries?

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

THEY SAID

War vs terrorism

"We will not allow the government to be caught in a squeeze play between terrorism and the peace process. Terrorists cannot hide behind pretensions to peace, we will expose them and throw the full weight of the law against them."

—President Macapagal-Arroyo, vowing to go after those responsible for the Sasa wharf bombing

Royal subjects

"We're acting like subjects forced to bring presents to visiting royalty."

—Rep. Abraham Kahlil Mitra on plans of the national government to release 62 Chinese poachers without undergoing trial

Chaos

"Where is our government? To whom do we belong now? I don't' know."

—Iraqi shopkeeper Ammar Moussa, after US forces entered Baghdad unchallenged

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A longer period for exploitation of workers

LETTERS

WE would like to thank Robin Sy, president of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCI), for his candor in explaining their proposals on such topics of vital interest as: the 10-year moratorium on labor strikes; expanding contractual work from six months to two years; and hiring workers at an apprentice rate, which is below the minimum wage. While we certainly would not agree to these repulsive ideas, we commend him for his honesty in admitting what we have been saying all along: that employers like him are only concerned about making their workers accept terms that will ensure more profit.

Coming at a time when we are about to celebrate the centennial of International Labor Day in the country, the FFCCCI's proposals are a clear reminder of how much more remains to be done until justice prevails.

We must recall the near-slave conditions of the working people which the labor movement has fought against for more than 100 years: hazardous working conditions; work shifts that could last more than 12 hours; wages that are barely enough to keep the workers alive for a day; no minimum labor standards whatsoever; and no trade union rights! All these were drastically changed because of the labor movement's determined struggle to advance workers' and trade union rights through collective bargaining and, when necessary, to wage concerted actions, including strikes.

Everything that the working people now enjoy was paid for by unionists. In most cases, they did so by putting their jobs on the line, and sometimes their own lives! Thus, while strikes are generally a response to oppressive conditions, workers use them only as their weapon of last recourse. And judging by how much the labor movement has uplifted workers' lives throughout these years, one can easily say that the right to strike, or even the threat of a strike, was instrumental in changing the conditions of the working people.

It is not surprising for us that Sy and his organization would complain against strikes. What is surprising though, is that he and his organization had the temerity to claim that should the government heed their proposals, the country stood to gain three million more jobs in the next two years. It sounded like the promises made by President Macapagal-Arroyo years ago when, as a senator, she was selling the benefits of joining the GATT-WTO. And we all know what happened to her promises. Nothing!

And what kind of jobs are they promising? Contractual labor stretched to two years with workers being paid below minimum wage! In other words, they no longer want to exploit workers for three to six months, as many employers currently do. This time they want to do so for two years.

—JOSUA MATA,
secretary general,
Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL),
102 Scout De Guia St., Barangay Sacred Heart,
Quezon City

Unhappy over column on gays

I AM gay, and hard as it has been for me to come out of the closet, I decided that one has to come out to be able to contribute to society's better understanding and tolerance of people like us.

Isagani Cruz's column last April 13 made me realize that indeed homophobia in the Philippines still runs high, even among people who you think are better educated and hence more understanding of homosexuals in a society like ours.

It saddened me to know that despite his erudition, Cruz still believes that gays are out there and act the way they do because they want to have all the attention of those around them. If only he knew how difficult it is for a gay person just to be himself.

What I got from his article was, just like the rest of society, that there is still a great ambivalence when it comes to gay people as well as a double standard: it is okay for one to be gay so long as he still toes the line of the macho image of the Filipino, thus deserving of what Cruz calls "our respect." It seems that dignity is reserved only for those who are manly, while the same should not be accorded to those who "wear feminine attire, paint their faces like women, and walk with mincing steps to look dainty," as he put it.

Cruz's column, I think, did more harm than good to Filipino society.

—RAFAEL B. BUEMIA,
Faculty of Education and Psychology
Excellence Program,
Ludwig Maximilian University,
Munich, Germany

SARS: good news, bad news

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE MEDIA frenzy around SARS has put the whole world on an emotional roller coaster. One day we all get elated with a headline like "SARS virus gene unlocked," with the article promising cures and vaccines in the near future. Then a few days later, we read about a whole province being declared in a state of calamity because of one SARS case.

I don't want to reinforce these terrible mood swings, but let me use a "good news, bad news" format to help us take stock of where we are now, drawing on the more staid (albeit dull) technical reports coming out of medical journals and websites of the World Health Organization and the US Centers for Disease Control.

Let's start off with SARS' infectiousness, especially because we keep hearing about "super-spreaders" or people who seem to pass on infections rapidly. The bad news is that these super-spreaders do exist, not just for SARS but for any disease. Scientists are still trying to figure out why this happens but this phenomenon certainly exists and it may be related to the stage of infection.

The good news is that not everyone who comes down with SARS is a super-spreader. Infections seem to take place only with close contact with patients, with most of the transmission taking place in hospitals. The problem (oops, bad news) is that in many poorer countries, including the Philippines, many patients will probably never reach a hospital and infections will take place in homes and in communities.

Will SARS evolve into a pandemic like that of influenza in 1918 which killed millions? The bad news is that we can't really project that far ahead. The statistics can be alarming, with the way new cases seem to be cropping up each day. The good news is that while the figures do rise rather quickly, they may not be as bad as it seems. When you read the papers or watch TV newscasts, you get the impression that every other person in Hong Kong now has SARS. In reality, the number of probable SARS cases was 1,434 as of April 22, out of a total population of 7 million.

This is not to trivialize the suffering that comes with SARS illness and deaths, but let's compare SARS with some other diseases. In some southern African countries, one out of every three adults is now infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, yet the world seems to have forgotten this threat.

One could argue that HIV is transmitted mainly by sex while SARS is a respiratory disease, and thus so much more easily passed on. Well, if we want to use that analogy, then let's look at another respiratory disease, tuberculosis. In the Philippines, each year hundreds of thousands are infected with tuberculosis, with 20,000 dying, but no one seems to worry about TB, until a close friend or relative gets it, or dies. SARS is scary because it's so new, so unfamiliar.

But what about the death rates for SARS? I'm going to reverse my discussion here and start with the good news. Right now the mortality rate is reported to be hovering around 5 percent. That's quite low compared to many other diseases. In fact, I try to console more panicky friends and suggest that instead of thinking of a "5 percent death rate," we could look at SARS in terms of a "95 percent survival rate."

But there's a "bad news" angle to this. The current 5 percent figure is derived by dividing deaths by total cases, which is not a reliable method of computation because many of the cases are still new, and we still don't know if the patient will recover or die. For example, Hong Kong has 1,434 reported cases but only 560 patients can be classified as being "resolved" cases. Of these 560, 461 recovered and 99 died. Now, if you divide 99 by 560, you get a 17.6 percent death rate. Using this method of computation, Canada, with 13 deaths and 65 recoveries, has a similar SARS death rate of 16.6 percent.

We're going to have to wait for a few more weeks to get a more reliable trend, based on more cases. But I worry that as the outbreak spreads out to more impoverished areas, we'll probably get a death rate higher than 5 percent.

I also tend to be more pessimistic because SARS death rates may have a strong correlation to the state of health care services. I've been following newscasts on Chinese television and am quite alarmed with the trend of reports coming from poorer provinces such as Inner Mongolia, with both cases and deaths escalating quite quickly. (All this in spite of China's tendency to under-report cases.)

Death rates from diseases often depend not just on the nature of hospital facilities but on the overall health status of citizens. If a person's immune system is already weakened by having to fight so many diseases—tuberculosis, for example, in the Philippines—the probability of death from SARS increases.

This is taking us to the matter of cures. The bad news is that there is no cure yet for SARS. There was some media hype when scientists figured out the SARS virus' genetic structure, with hints that treatment and vaccines would not be far off. We forget that it's been almost 20 years since scientists identified HIV, the cause of AIDS, and we still don't have a cure or vaccine.

There are anti-viral drugs but these only slow down the virus' reproduction. One of these drugs, ribavarin, is being used for SARS patients but technically speaking, these anti-virals are not cures.

The good news is that patients do recover from SARS, even without "cures." SARS is terribly virulent but so are older diseases such as influenza and pneumonia. The SARS virus is a mutated version of the cold virus, which infects millions of people each day. Patients will recover from viral diseases even without drugs. The key is to strengthen the patients' own immune systems.

Next Tuesday let's look at the good and bad news around this matter of strengthening people's immune systems, as well as questions about SARS prevention.

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  Sarabia Manor Hotel, Iloilo City
- May 11 (Sunday)
  1:00 - 5:00 pm
  L'Fisher Hotel, Bacolod City
- May 17 (Saturday)
  1:00-5:00pm
  Grand Caprice,
  Lim Ket Kai Center
  Cagayan de Oro City
- May 24 (Saturday)
  1:00-5:00pm
  Veniz Hotel, Baguio City
- May 25 (Sunday)
  1:00-5:00pm
  Star Plaza Hotel, Dagupan City
- May 31 (Saturday)
  1:00-5:00pm
  Legenda Hotel,
  Waterfront Road,
  Olongapo City
- June 6 (Friday)
  1:00-5:00pm
  Regent Hotel (Oyster Grill),
  Naga City
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  1:00-5:00pm
  La Trinidad Hotel, Legazpi City

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

NO BREAKTHROUGH EXPECTED

US, North Korea begin nuclear talks

BEIJING—US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly sat down for talks on Wednesday with North Korea aimed at resolving a standoff over Pyongyang's suspected nuclear weapons program, but few expect a breakthrough.

With North Korean negotiator Li Gun not considered senior enough to cut deals, diplomats said the first formal face-off between Washington and Pyongyang since the crisis began last October was likely to yield only plans for more talks.

Kelly and Li were huddled behind closed doors at the Diaoyutai State Guest House, the walled garden compound where China receives visiting dignitaries, South Korea's YTN cable news network reported.

A US Embassy spokesperson said the three-day talks were going forward as planned, but declined to give any details.

North Korea wants a security guarantee from the United States and says it needs a powerful deterrent to stave off the threat of attack. Washington says Pyongyang must scrap its nuclear program before it will offer a guarantee.

This wide gulf between the two was unlikely to be bridged this week and the Beijing meetings marked the start of what is likely to be a lengthy process to defuse the crisis.

Both sides staked out tough positions ahead of the talks, with Secretary of State Colin Powell saying the United States would not be intimidated by a nuclear armed North Korea and could "do whatever might be required" in face of such a threat.

North Korea's air force began long-distance flight training in moves apparently aimed to counter US fighter jet tactics used in the war in Iraq, South Korea's defense ministry said.

And Pyongyang railed against "US imperialists," although analysts said it would be under pressure to keep the lines of communication open take a more measured tone at the talks.

China, widely seen as a little more than a facilitator in the discussions, hosted a working breakfast with the US delegation ahead of the multilateral talks. One analyst said China would keep to the sidelines as much as possible.

"The purpose of these talks is to get started, for us to be able to lay out the means for a verifiable and irreversible end to North Korea's nuclear program," US State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said in Washington.

"I'm sure the North Koreans will lay out their positions as well," he said.

The Korean peninsula remains the Cold War's last flash point and reclusive North Korea, which talks regularly about war being imminent, fears it could be the next target after the quick US military campaign in Iraq.

US President George W. Bush, who has bracketed North Korea in an "axis of evil" with pre-war Iraq and Iran, told magazine reporters on Tuesday he has no current plans for another war.

Washington wants the North Koreans to close down their nuclear program to end a crisis festering since October.

"Apart from agreeing on the continuation of dialogue, I am not expecting much to come out of this," said an Asian diplomat in Beijing. "They are not going to be seeing eye to eye on many things."

China, which invited the two sides, would play "honest broker" to keep the talks moving, the diplomat said.

A breakthrough offer from the North Korean side seemed unlikely. Li would be unable to offer major concessions or cut deals due to his relatively junior rank and would be limited to discussing procedural matters, a Western diplomat said.

"He will have very, very little negotiating room," he said.

North Korea threw the talks into doubt last week with a statement saying it was "successfully reprocessing" nuclear fuel rods. It later corrected what analysts said was a translation error to say it was on the verge of reprocessing the rods, a precursor to making bombs.

The nuclear standoff began in October, when Washington said the North admitted to an active covert program to make highly enriched uranium for nuclear arms beside a plutonium program frozen under a 1994 pact with the United States.

This time, the US goal is to eliminate, rather than merely freeze, those programs—a tall order, experts say. *Reuters*

Yokohama Tire Philippines to Boost Production Capacity 25%, centered on High-Performance Tires

Tokyo—The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd., has announced that Yokohama Tire Philippines, Inc., a passenger tire manufacturing and marketing subsidiary, will upgrade its facilities to boost production. The initiative will begin in April. By the end of the year, annual capacity will expand from 2 million units, to 2.5 million. The upgrade will cost around 2 billion yen.

Yokohama Tire Philippines will step up production of 16-inch and larger high-performance passenger car tires and of recreational vehicle tires, for which demand is growing internationally. This subsidiary currently makes passenger tires of 13-to-16 inches. By year-end, 16-inch and larger models and recreational vehicle tires should account for about 30% of production. The upgrade will entail the construction of new facilities on that company's current property.

Yokohama Tire Philippines was established in April 1996, started production in January 1998 and has been profitable since the beginning. The new facilities will feature highly efficient lines that simply categorize models and sizes. About 90% of its output is exported to Europe, the Middle East, and other ASEAN nations. The balance is for the aftermarket and Japanese automakers in the Philippines.

Profile of Yokohama Tire Philippines, Inc.

Address: IE5, Clark Special Economic Zone Clark Field, Pampanga, Phils.
Date of establishment: April 1996
Paid-in capital: Y2.5 billion (80% from Yokohama Rubber and 20% from Kawasho Corp.)
President: Andrei Seiji Takai (from The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd.)
Operations: Manufacturing and marketing passenger car tires
Property size: 165,000 square meter
Number of employees: 560

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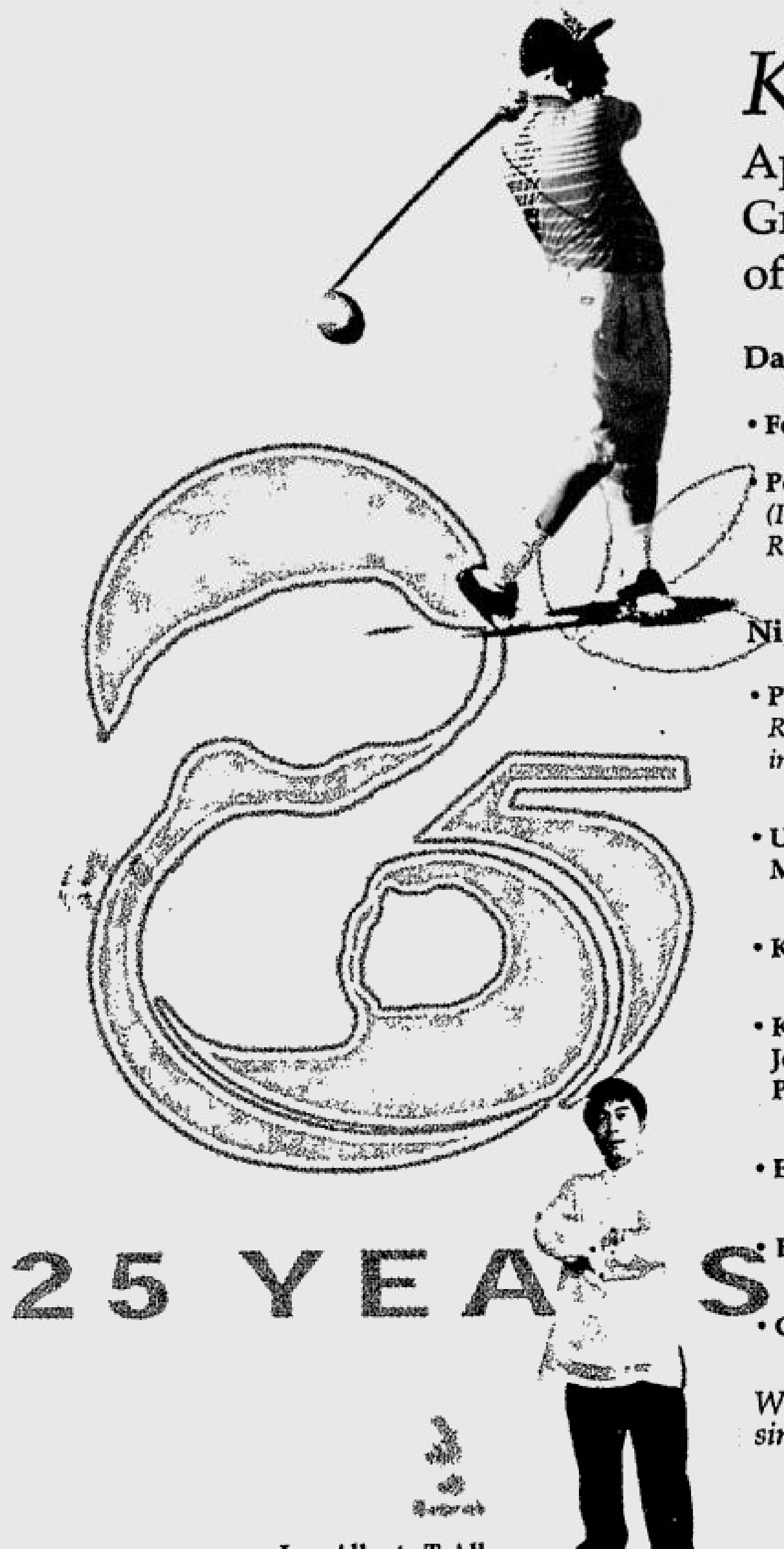

Kasiyahan

April 23, 2003
Grand Reunion
of Prudentialifers

Day Activities

- **Founder's Cup Golf Classic**
- **Portrait of the Prudentialife Family**
  (Integrated Photo Exhibit)
  Ribbon Cutting at 4:30 pm

Night Activities

- **Parade of Colors**
  Regional delegates to parade
  into the ballroom to signal start of the event
- **Unveiling of the 25th Anniversary Logo Marker for the Prudentialife Time Capsule**
- **Kapamilya Corporate Audio Visual Presentation**
- **Kapamilya Welcome Messsage**
  Jose Alberto T. Alba
  Prudentialife President
- **Exchange of Tokens by Delegates**
- **BAYANIHAN Dance Troupe**
- **Cocktails/Dinner**

With one voice, Prudentialifers sing their own hymn of kinship!

Jose Alberto T. Alba
Prudentialife President

Kapamilya Hymn

Kaisa kita, kaisa mo 'ko
Ang puso ko'y puso mo
Dahil ako'y kapamilya mo
At ika'y kapamilya ko

Sa Prudentialife
Tayo'y isang pamilya
Hangad natin ginhawa
Buhay na maganda
Kay Nanay, Tatay, Ate, Kuya

Ang Prudentialife
Ating kompanya,
Atin ding kapamilya

Ang Prudentialife
Kapamilya mo
Kapamilya ka
Kapamilya natin
Ang Prudentialife

Top 10 Agency Managers

Rowena V. Gonzalez
Ma. Katherine L. Nubla
Lolita P. del Carmen
Juliet D. Kotoken
Elsie D. Dondoyano
Agnes H. Reyes
Catalina M. Gunay
Roselo I. Cantos
Gay G. Rubio
Anna Liza M. Ibon

Area Managers Consistency Awardees

Ronaldo H. Adriano
Diana T. Agco
Porfirio V. Cabaslsi
Emelita C. Crisostomo
Luther P. Garcia
Oscar J. Gonzalez, Jr.
Rodolfo R. Guevarra
Lydia C. Pesueña
Remedios B. Velasco
Julita C. Yjares

Top 5
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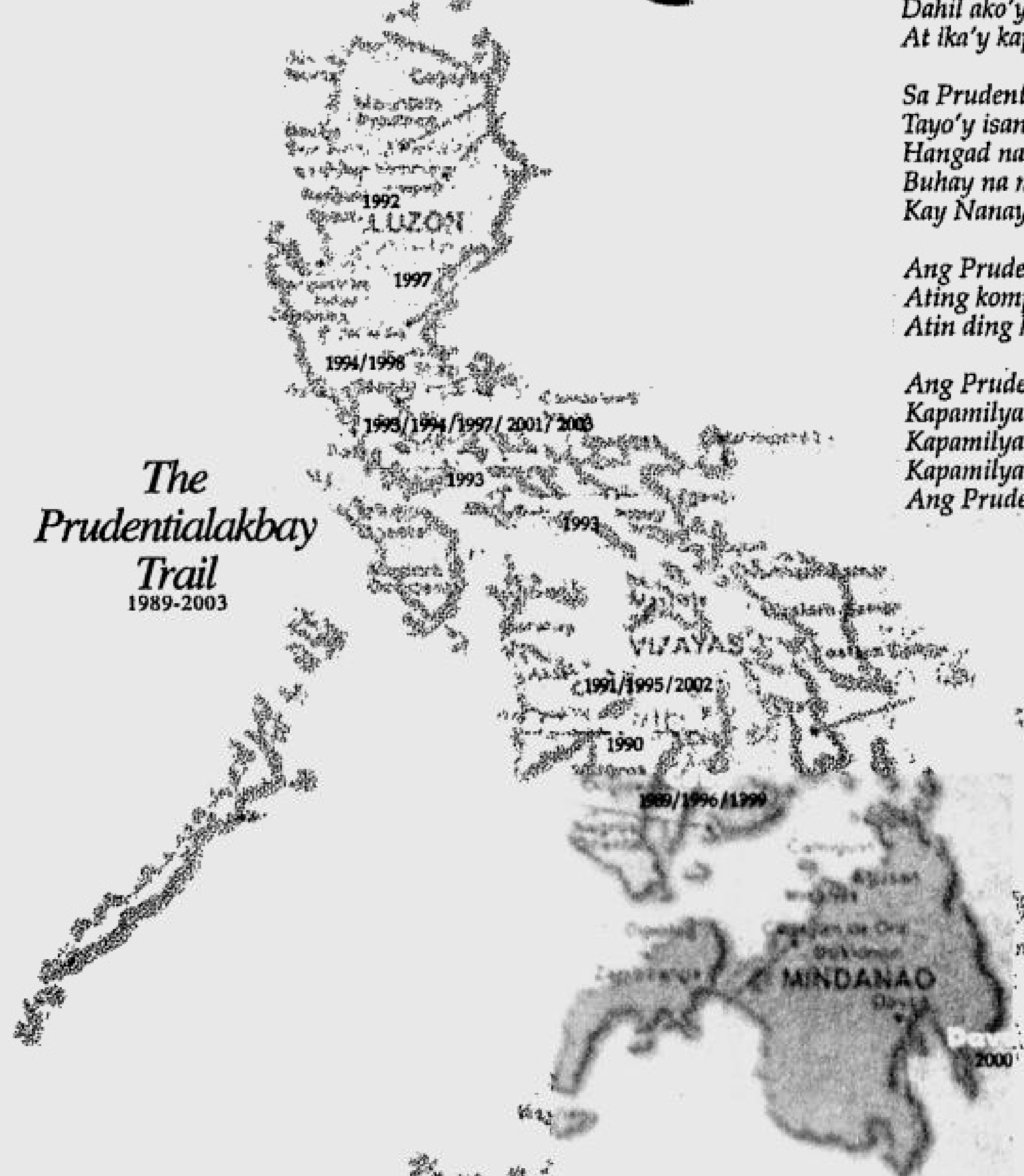

The Prudentialakbay Trail
1989-2003

Prudentialakbay is an annual celebration of Prudentialife. At this time, the company gathers together as one big happy family to give recognition to its yearly Sales Olympics Champions at The Westin Philippine Plaza.

It is the hardworking and dedicated men and women of Prudentialife that has propelled the company to be a leading pre-need company in the country today. This 25th Foundation Year, Prudentialife, as one family, expresses once more its continuing commitment to bring the good life to the Filipino family.

It is doubly significant that this year's celebration coincides with the company's 25th Anniversary celebration. The biggest gathering of Prudentialifers at one time, it is a true demonstration of the company's "Kapamilya" spirit.

The Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) has not approved this advertisement or determined if this is accurate or complete. Any representation to the contrary constitute a

ialakbay
2003

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Champions
02

Top 10 Sales Counselors

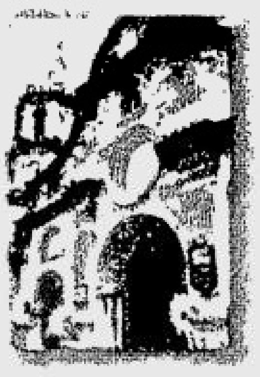
Emmanuel R. dela Cruz
Ramon Ma. Gonzalez, Jr.
Marie Charisse D. Asuncion
Ma. Carmen T. Villacorte
Ritchell D. Dondoyano
Marie Krista N. Bautista
Edith M. Tulabut
Carolina A. Cruz
Rosa M. Goco
Regina T. Vidal

Area Managers

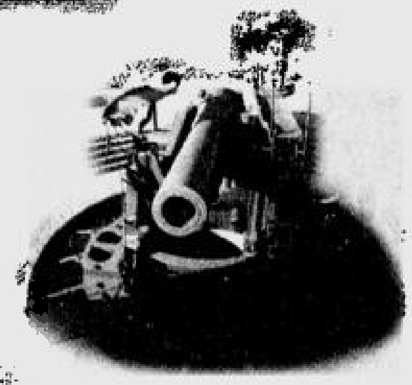
ar J. Gonzalez, Jr.
rfirio V. Cabasisi
uther P. Garcia
dia C. Pesueña
ielma T. Pasion

Kagalingan

April 24, 2003
Gabi ng Parangal
Sales Olympians Awards



Day Activities



- **WOW Prudentialakbay Tours**
  Delegates to enjoy the Manila City Tour, Marikina City Tour, Eight Waves Water Park Tour and Corregidor Island City Tour
- **Misa ng Pasasalamat**
  As a Symbolic Prayer for Peace, three white doves and 25 blue and white balloons will be released after the Thanksgiving Mass at 8:00 am
- **Game Show at 10:00 am**
- **Dance Competition at 2:00 pm**

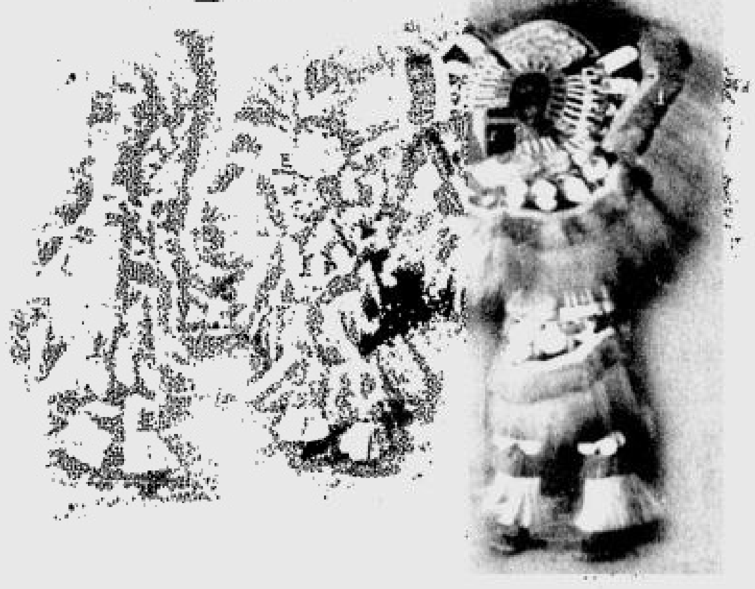
Night Activities

- **Gabi ng Parangal**
  Tribute to the National Sales Olympics Champions 2002
- **PILAK Awards Ceremonies**
  Special recognition to be given to H.E. Francisco A. Alba, Prudentialife Founder and Philippine Ambassador to the Holy See and Hon. Jocelyn I. Bolante, Department of Agriculture Undersecretary, for their pioneering spirit and dedicated service to the Filipino Family
- **President's Message**
  Jose Alberto T. Alba
  Prudentialife President

Kasaysayan

April 25, 2003
Balik-Tanaw

Day Activities



- **WOW Prudentialakbay Tours**
  Delegates to visit top tourist spots
- **Bingo Social at 10:00 am**
- **Singing Competition at 2:00 pm**

Night Activity

- **Cultural Night**
  Featuring a pageantry of the past —
  The Prudentialife Story

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Shiites protest occupation; US slams France

KERBALA, Iraq—Iraqi clerics called fresh anti-US protests Wednesday at the climax of a pilgrimage by hundreds of thousands of Shiite Muslims, as US officials said bluntly that erstwhile ally France should be punished for its opposition to the US-led invasion of Iraq.

Washington's outburst came despite France's announcement that it was prepared to heed US calls for a swift suspension of economic sanctions against Iraq without UN certification that it was free of weapons of mass destruction.

US ally Australia meanwhile hit back at charges by UN disarmament chief Hans Blix that coalition intelligence about Iraqi weapons programs had been "shaky," insisting a "smoking gun" would yet be found to justify the US-led ouster of Saddam Hussein's regime.

But the coalition came under fresh fire from UN officials for obstructing post-war relief and reconstruction, even as the US civil administrator, retired Gen. Jay Garner, pressed on with a tour of Iraq's battered infrastructure to assess the needs.

In the Shiite holy city of Kerbala, 80 km south of Baghdad, loudspeaker trucks had been touring since Tuesday evening calling for a huge anti-US demonstration the following morning.

"We invite you to join a peaceful protest against the foreign occupation which will leave from the south gate of the Imam Hussein mausoleum," the city's main shrine, the loud-hailers said.

Even before the kick-off time for the rally, chants of "No to America and Saddam, yes to Islam" rang out around the city, from which US troops have kept a discreet distance throughout the pilgrimage.

Organizing committee member Sheikh Raed Haidari said the protest would also target Iraqi National Congress chief Ahmad Chalabi, a deeply secular Shiite regarded by the US military as a possible future leader of Iraq.

"We refuse occupation, we want an elected government that represents the people," Sheikh Raed said.

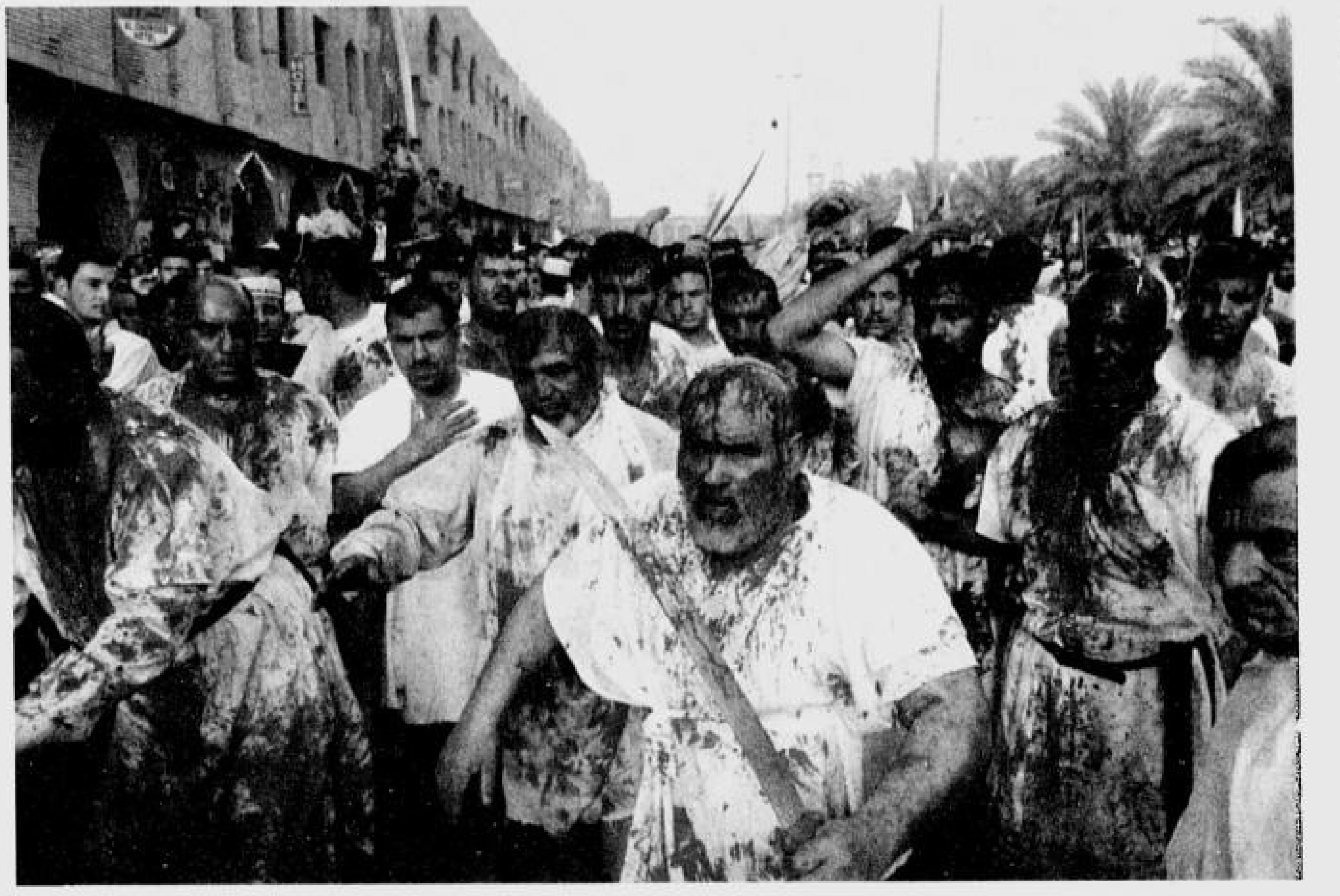
In a development likely to further inflame tensions between the coalition and Iraq's majority Shiite community, a prominent cleric charged that he had been beaten by US troops.

"Our arrest by the Americans was worse than the arrests that Saddam ordered against our students," Sheikh Mohammed al-Fartusi told Abu Dhabi television.

Fartusi, whose followers said he was detained Sunday along with five other Shiites, reappeared in Baghdad on Tuesday to cheers from hundreds of supporters who had held protests for two days.

"We were beaten . . . spent a night with our hands tied behind our backs," Fartusi said, adding however that an American officer did turn up and offer an apology.

"It was disgusting. Despite that none of our young men has pointed a weapon against America . . . but next time, God alone knows what popular anger could lead to?" the cleric warned. *AFP*



MUSLIM Shiites bleed after beating themselves with swords as a religious sacrifice to the Prophet Hussein during the annual pilgrimage, which was banned by Saddam Hussein for the last twenty-five years, on April 22 in the holy city of Kerbala, Iraq.

GETTY IMAGES

Indonesian cleric Bashir tried for treason

JAKARTA—An Indonesian Muslim cleric accused of leading the regional terror network blamed for the Bali bombing went on trial for treason here Wednesday under blanket security.

Abu Bakar Bashir, the alleged "emir" of Jemaah Islamiah (JI), is charged with trying to topple the government and set up an Islamic state.

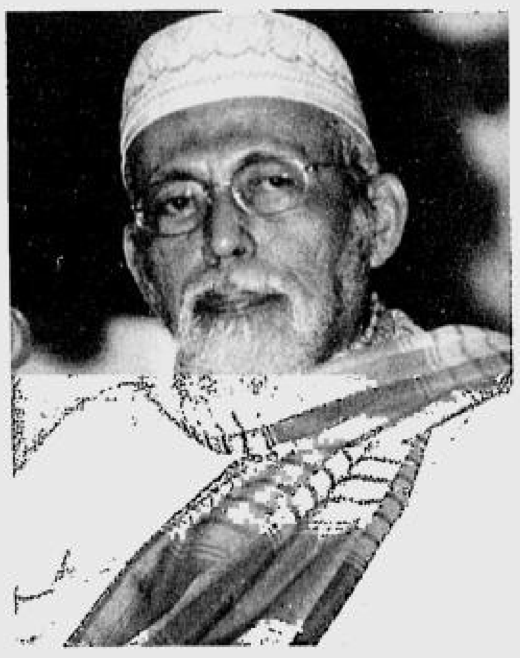
JI, which is thought linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, is suspected of staging the bombing of two Bali nightspots which killed 202 people last October and of involvement in a string of other bloody attacks in the region.

A deafening shout of "Allahu Akbar!" (God is Great) arose from Bashir's supporters as the white-bearded cleric entered the packed court to answer the charge of treason, punishable by up to 20 years' jail.

Bashir, wearing a long white shirt and white skullcap, sat calmly as prosecutors read a chilling indictment accusing him of bombing churches, plotting to assassinate the woman who is now president and conspiring to blast US targets in Singapore.

Bashir is not accused of involvement in the Bali blasts.

"I absolutely object to the trial. The whole thing is slander made up by the United States," a defiant Bashir told reporters as he was led back to a cell after the hearing was adjourned till April 30.



BASHIR on the dock. AFP

The trial is seen as a test case of the government's willingness to prosecute terror suspects.

Before the Bali blasts, leaders of the world's most populous Muslim nation denied that JI even exists in their country and shrugged off foreign criticism that they were soft on terrorism.

Prosecutors said the 64-year-old cleric in 1993 co-founded "an organization called Jama'atul minal-Muslimin or al Jemaah al Islamiah."

He is "the leader and organizer of treason with the intention of overthrowing the government, namely to realize plans to establish an Islamic State of Indonesia . . . ," said chief prosecutor Hasan Madani.

The indictment says Bashir authorized the Christmas Eve bombings of churches and priests in 2000 which killed 19 people in Indonesia.

He is said to have approved a plot to bomb US interests in Singapore which was foiled with the arrest of 13 JI suspects there.

The cleric is also accused of ordering the assassination of current President Megawati Sukarnoputri when she was still vice president. Another JI member, Mukhlas, is said to have refused that order because it was not feasible.

Bashir, according to the indictment, "disseminated a teaching on jihad as the noblest and highest deed through waging war against any party that obstructs the upholding of the words of Allah, which means war in its literal sense."

The indictment accuses him of conspiring with leading JI members Hambali, Zulkarnaen, Imam Samudra and Mukhlas.

Hambali, as former operations chief of JI, is one of Asia's most wanted men.

Samudra and Mukhlas, who is said to be Hambali's replacement, are among 30 people awaiting trial for the Bali bombings and Zulkarnaen is on the wanted list. *AFP*

US planners underrated Iraqi Shiites, report says

WASHINGTON—US officials plotting the future of Iraq underestimated the organizational strength of the Shiite majority and are not prepared to prevent the rise of an anti-American, Islamic fundamentalist government, The Washington Post reported on Wednesday.

The newspaper, quoting Bush administration officials, reported that US intelligence reports reaching top officials throughout the government this week said the Shiites appear to be much more organized than was thought. Shiites make up about 60 percent of the Iraqi population and were oppressed for decades under the rule of ousted President Saddam Hussein.

In a show of political strength, hundreds of thousands of Shiite Muslims filled the holy city of Kerbala on Tuesday in a long-banned pilgrimage marked by religious fervor and chants of "Yes to Islam, No to America."

A meeting of generals and admirals at the Pentagon on Monday turned into a spontaneous teach-in on Iraq's Shiites and the US strategy for containing Islamic fundamentalism in Iraq, the article said.

US officials said this week that as the administration plotted to overthrow Saddam Hussein's government, too little attention was paid to the dynamics of religion and politics in the region. They also said the administration failed to fully appreciate the force of Shiite aspirations and is now concerned that those sentiments could lead to a fundamentalist government, the newspaper reported.

"It is a complex equation, and the US government is ill-equipped to figure out how this is going to shake out," a State Department official told The Washington Post. "I don't think anyone took a step backward and asked, 'What are we looking for?' The focus was on the overthrow of Saddam Hussein."

According to the newspaper, some US intelligence analysts and Iraq experts said they warned the Bush administration before the war about overthrowing Hussein's government without having anything to replace it. But officials told the newspaper the concerns were either not heard or were low on the priority list of post-war planning. *Reuters*

Dog has as many lives as a cat

CLEARLAKE, California—A dog named Dosha may have as many lives as a cat.

She was hit by a car, shot in the head and kept in a freezer for two hours, but she survived and is now doing well under a veterinarian's care.

Local animal groups and the Humane Society of the United States have begun fund-raising efforts to pay for her care.

Last Tuesday, Dosha was hit by a car. A Clearlake police officer reported to the scene and no one could tell him who owned the dog.

Officer Bob MacDonald shot the dog, apparently to save her the pain of her injuries. Dosha, presumed dead, was taken to Animal Control, where she was put in a freezer.

About two hours later, Denise Johnson, Animal Control's interim director, was at the impound facility and was told of the incident.

"Apparently, it was assumed dead," Johnson said. "I went to the freezer and found that she was alive and cold."

She had hypothermia and a gunshot wound, but no broken bones from the car accident, Johnson said.

Police are investigating. *AP*

US sugar lobby hits WHO report urging cutback in sweets intake

LONDON—An effort to get an increasingly flabby world to stop eating so much sugar ran head-on into the US sugar lobby, which claims the dangers of the sweet stuff are being overstated.

People should get no more than 10 percent of their daily calories from sugar and other high-calorie sweeteners, the World Health Organization will recommend in a report on Wednesday.

That guideline is among several in WHO's attempt at a global strategy on health aimed at preventing such threats as heart disease, obesity, cancer and diabetes. It was immediately attacked by the Sugar Association, which represents US growers and refiners.

"Taxpayers' dollars should not be used to support misguided, non-science-based reports which do not add to the health and well-being of Americans, much less the rest of the world," Sugar Association chief Andrew Briscoe wrote the director general of WHO.

Briscoe said his group "will exercise every avenue available to expose the dubious nature" of the report, "including asking Congress to challenge future funding of the United States' $406 million contribution to the WHO."

Briscoe cited a far more lenient US study on sugar—one by the National Academy of Sciences in September that found no conclusive evidence people suffered nutritionally until their sugar intake exceeded 25 percent of daily calories.

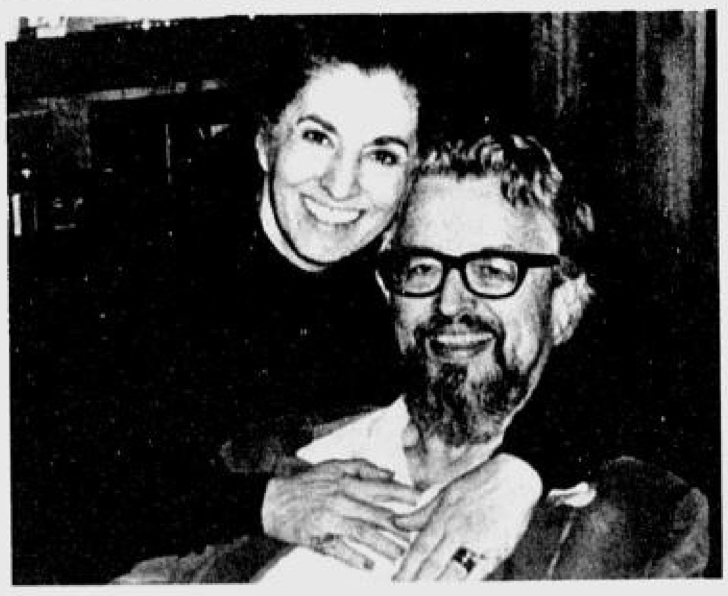
"They completely ignored this key report," Briscoe said.

Philip James, chair of the International Obesity Task Force, said the panel did consider the Academy of Sciences report, along with scores of others. The draft was discussed extensively at international nutrition conferences, he said.

"It went out not only to explicit peer reviewers but, for the first time, it was posted on the Web. In fact, it's gone through a bigger peer review than any other WHO report ever," he said. "That was done because it was recognized to be controversial from an industry point of view."

It is precisely because the WHO is a global agency distanced from elections and the need for campaign funds that it was able to take such a strong stand on sugar, James said.

Half of the adults in Europe and 61 percent in the United States are overweight, and the epidemic is spreading around the globe as Western lifestyles infiltrate new areas, experts say. *AP*



BYE, BYE FELICE AP

Songwriters Felice Bryant, left, and her husband, Boudleaux, are shown in a 1980s file photo. Felice Bryant died April 22, at her home in Gatlinburg, Tenn. She was 77. The couple wrote hits for the Everly Brothers such as "Bye Bye Love" and "Wake Up Little Susie." The Bryants also wrote the song "Rocky Top," which has become a Tennessee state song as well as the fight song for the University of Tennessee. Boudleaux Bryant died in 1987.

Orphanages spring up in Kashmir as war breaks up families

By Mujtaba Ali Ahmad

SRINAGAR, India—Swirling his colorful scarves through the air, the juggler draws a laugh from the 5-year-old boy wrapped in a blanket in a drafty, red brick orphanage on a Kashmir mountaintop.

"It is so freaky how he makes colorful circles with those strips of cloth," says a beaming Aijaz Ahmad Rather.

Aijaz has rarely smiled since his father, a separatist militant, was killed in a gunbattle with Indian security forces three years ago. Left destitute, his mother couldn't care for him and so sent him to the Garden Palace orphanage.

Thirteen years of violence in Jammu-Kashmir, India's only state with a Muslim majority, have taken a toll on the Himalayan region's families. Some 80,000 children have been orphaned or abandoned, the Jammu-Kashmir Orphans Trust estimated after a survey last year.

Most of the children, ages 3-15, have lost parents in cross-fires, land mine explosions and gunbattles during the insurgency by separatist Muslim rebels who have fought since 1989 for Kashmir's independence or merger with Islamic Pakistan.

Before the rebellion, Kashmir had one orphanage, the Garden Palace, where Aijaz is the youngest of 52 residents. Now there are more than a dozen orphanages, and five more are being built.

"It is not just the militancy that has led to the proliferation of orphanages, although it is the biggest contributing factor," said Abdul Rashid Hanjoora, general secretary of the Orphans Trust.

Khaksar Mohammad Maqbool, a Muslim cleric, said traditional Islamic values eroded since the 1980s in the portion of Kashmir that is in India.

"In the old days, when a family member died, his dependents would be taken care of by the relatives, who lived as one big family," Maqbool said. "Not only has old kinship disappeared, but so has compassion."

Private organizations provide shelter, food, education and health care for about 1,500 orphans in spite of limited funds.

"We can't reach out to all. But whatever we do, it is still a tough task to deliver, with little money and no government support," said Hanjoora at the Orphans Trust.

He thinks the lack of money available for orphanages is an indication that Kashmiris—traditionally hospitable and compassionate in a tightly knit society—have become more impersonal and less caring.

Maqbool agreed. "With the collapse of the sociopolitical creed after armed rebellion broke out, people have been left spiritually naked," he said.

But he added that the deaths of more than 61,000 people, mostly Muslims, to violence have overtaxed Kashmiris' ability to deal with orphans.

Hameed-Ullah, 35, director of the Garden Palace orphanage, said institutions are helping save children's lives as well as preventing them from becoming street beggars or household servants and missing out on education, which is highly valued in Kashmiri society.

Both Hameed-Ullah and Maqbool feel, however, that Islam requires individuals to take responsibility for orphans. They note the Quran, which lays down most rules for an Islamic society, exhorts Muslims to be good to orphans and doesn't mention orphanages.

"Islam does not want Muslims to make impersonal acts of charity," Maqbool said.

Akhtar Wali, a 12-year-old dressed in a long, woolen Kashmiri tunic, considers the Garden Palace his home. It's where he has learned about love and affection from Hameed-Ullah and the other children.

"I don't remember anything about my parents," Akhtar says. "The caretaker treats all of us as his own children. The others are my brothers." *AP*

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2003

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

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Pacificador presses refugee status bid

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—After successfully blocking the government's move to extradite him, Rodolfo Pacificador, one of the accused in the murder of former Antique Gov. Evelio Javier, is pressing his bid to be granted refugee status in Canada.

The Federal Court of Canada last month granted permission for Pacificador to appeal an earlier ruling of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada, denying his application to be recognized as a refugee.

The court will hear Pacificador's appeal on June 24, said Robert Burley, Second Secretary of the Canadian embassy in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER.

Pacificador fled to Canada in October 1987 and requested refugee status. The IRB denied his application in August last year. Pacificador then filed a petition to appeal the ruling.

Burley said the board did not give reasons for the denial but he said applications for refugee status were usually granted only to applicants who had well-founded fears of persecution in their country.

If the federal court upholds the ruling of the immigration board, Pacificador can still appeal the ruling to the Federal Court of Appeal up to the Supreme Court.

If his application is denied with finality, he will be asked to leave Canada, according to Burley.

But Pacificador cannot be sent back to the Philippines to face trial for Javier's murder.

Canadian courts had denied the Philippine government's request to extradite Pacificador to the Philippines to stand trial.

The courts believed that sending him back to the Philippines would violate Pacificador's constitutional right under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms because he faced persecution and serious threats to his life, if he was extradited.

Pacificador is among the 18 accused in the murder of Javier and the wounding of several others.

Javier, a leading figure in the opposition movement against the Marcos dictatorship, was shot dead by heavily armed men in front of the provincial capitol on Feb. 11. 1986 while he was monitoring results of the snap presidential elections.

Rodolfo's father, former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador, was tagged the mastermind. He is now detained at the Antique provincial jail along with 11 of his co-accused.

Prosecution witnesses had testified that the younger Pacificador was present in the planning of Javier's murder. They alleged that he met with the gunmen before and after the killing.

The elder Pacificador said he was confident that his son would be granted refugee status.

"The Canadian courts including the Supreme Court have already ruled that my son faces persecution here," the former assemblyman said in a telephone interview.

In January, the Antique Regional Trial Court denied the petition for bail of all but one of the 18 accused.

Those denied bail were the Pacificadors, Avelino Javellana, Eduardo "Boy Muslim" Iran, former Philippine Constabulary Capt. John Paloy, Vicente Vegafria, Ramon Hortillano, Henry Salaver, Eleazar Idemne, Rolando Bernardino, Oscar Tiauson, Henry Seguerra, Jimmy Punzalan, and four persons known only as Akang, Noynoy, Tatang and Dolfo.

The court allowed accused Jose Seguerra to post P300,000 in bail because the prosecution had weak evidence to show his participation in the crime.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

DANNY (left) receives medicines from rural health workers in Barangay Vacante in Alcala, Pangasinan. The Austrias had been in direct contact with SARS victim Adela Catalon before her death.

Popcom employees want director out

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Employees of the Population Commission in Eastern Visayas (Popcom-8) are demanding the ouster of their regional director who is accused of sexually harassing a female subordinate.

Eleven of the 17 employees of Popcom-8 signed a petition, urging Popcom executive director Tomas Osias to remove Leo Rama who has been the agency's regional director for 20 years.

One of the reasons they cited for demanding Rama's removal was the sexual harassment charges filed by Almira Robin, Popcom-8 project evaluation officer II, before the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas.

They also accused Rama of grave abuse of authority for allegedly using the office's equipment and personnel for personal use.

Rama vowed to fight the charges leveled against him. "These were all made up and character assassination. It is unfair to my family," he told the INQUIRER.

Robin filed charges of sexual harassment and grave threats against Rama on March 12 before the OMB-Visayas based in Cebu City.

In her six-page letter-complaint, Robin said Rama made sexual advances at her on Nov. 9, 2002 in his office at the Government Center in Barangay Candahug, Palo town, Leyte.

She said Rama told her that he would feel aroused every time he saw her legs. He then allegedly told her to hold his sex organ.

"I was so nervous and I felt so uncomfortable with his action and asked Director Rama in a very polite manner for us not to talk about such things," she said.

But Robin said Rama allegedly persisted and asked her not to be embarrassed because "it is part of the reproductive health and that it is one focus area(s) of the Philippine population Management Program."

Rama, she said, then told her to ask permission from her husband so she and Rama could meet at the nearby MacArthur Park.

Robin said Rama only stopped when an employee identified only as Villablanca knocked on the office door. Robin then left the office. But Rama allegedly did not stop.

Robin said Rama asked her to work on some papers in their computer room, which was just across his office. She said he came inside the room, "stood behind me while overlooking my work, (and) then suddenly placed his hands on my shoulders."

"I immediately warded off his hands from my shoulders and told him in Waray 'ayaw ito boss (don't do that boss.)."

On Dec. 10, 2002, Robin alleged that Rama called her up and confronted her on her plan to file a case of sexual harassment against him.

"Rama told me to shut my mouth because if I didn't I would be dead before I reached the Ombudsman as he would have me killed by his wife's nephew by the name of Oscar Yu," she said.

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US soldiers not exempt from SARS check

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—American troops arriving here from Japan, one of three countries recently placed on the Department of Health's alert list, were not exempted from undergoing health checks for symptoms of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

The about 200 American soldiers that reached Clark's Diosdado Macapagal International Airport here via a chartered plane of the North American Airlines before noon Tuesday were required to accomplish a DOH checklist on their health condition.

Aside from Dr. Sesnando Sandalo, the DOH medical quarantine officer at the DMIA, the DOH also sent a team of five medical personnel to maintain a SARS desk and assess the information on the checklist. Sandalo said this was the standard form used at the Naia and other official entry ports in the country.

The INQUIRER saw Sandalo boarding the plane for what he called a "random inspection of passengers." He got off the plane after less than 10 minutes. Asked if this duration was enough to spot sick passengers, he said the time was sufficient because the US troops "looked healthy anyway."

Earlier in an interview with reporters, Sandalo said US military doctors did not give him a certification vouching that the members of the US contingent arriving via the DMIA were all SARS-free.

"I am the one who will determine if they are SARS-free or not," he said, indicating that the responsibility rested on local health officials.

Three ambulances were placed on standby to bring anyone showing SARS symptoms to the local quarantine center at the Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital in the City of San Fernando, some 30 km from Clark. Sandalo did not report detecting anyone with SARS symptoms.

Members of the US contingent formed a single line at the passenger's terminal, passing the SARS desk before they were allowed to enter Clark, which for almost a century was the US' largest military air base.

Sandalo said US soldiers who had arrived on Monday night and two more batches coming into Clark up to Tuesday night would be required to undergo the same procedures.

Capt. Burrell Parmer, the US military spokesperson of Balikatan-03, said all visiting forces were properly informed on the use of the checklist. He said military medical personnel had also made sure that all soldiers were healthy before departure schedules.

At least 1,200 American troops participating in the two-week Balikatan-03 are also banned from leaving the exercise sites in Luzon because the "threat level (in the Philippines) is high," Parmer said.

It was the Philippine government's Department of Defense that provided the assessment on the threat situation in the country. He declined to elaborate, citing security concerns.

To make sure that forces were well protected, Parmer said "liberty" (the military term for off-duty hours used for recreation activities) from April 25 to May 9 would have to be reduced at the discretion of the commanders of the US Army and Marine Corps units joining the war games.

"Our main mission here is to train . . . not to party," he said.

In the event of an attack by terror groups, Parmer said: "Of course, we will defend ourselves."

But he said he was not anticipating that attack, noting that the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the US Armed Forces had put in place adequate security arrangements for the protection of forces, including 2,500 Philippine troops from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force.

Maj. Vicente Batac, Parmer's counterpart, said the communities around the training areas in Clark, Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, and Ternate in Cavite, were "relatively safe."

Parmer said the US is spending nearly $7 million in this Balikatan, the 19th since these types of large-scale combined military exercises were held in 1981 for the inter-operability of forces.

About $120,000 have been allotted for humanitarian and civic projects in villages near exercise sites. At least $1.3 million, earmarked for contracting expenses, are expected to directly go to the local economy.

AIRPORT personnel, left, wearing a mask to avoid the SARS virus, watches a line of US Marines with their accomplished health check forms upon arrival at Clark Air Base on Tuesday. AP

FOR DEATH OF 2 KIDS

Court orders Cebu gov't to pay couple

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The couple who lost their two children during a landslide in an upland barangay won a court battle against the Cebu City government and Barangay Buhisan here.

Cebu Regional Trial Court Judge Agapito Hontanosas, in an April 4 decision, ordered the city government and Barangay Buhisan to pay a total of P430,000 to spouses Eduardo Wilson Nadela Sr. and his wife Noelma whose children died in a landslide in the barangay in 1999.

Judge Hontanosas found the city government as well as Barangay Buhisan "negligent" or "at fault" in constructing a road project in a quarry site in the barangay.

The court said such negligence was the "proximate cause" of the deaths of the minor victims.

"It is the finding of the Court that the defendants failed to exercise extra-ordinary diligence in the construction of the road project," Hontanosas said.

The Nadela couple filed a damage suit against the city government and Barangay Buhisan after their children, Eduardo Wilson Jr., 10, and John Carlo, 6, died in the accident sometime in January 1999.

In his April 4 order, Hontanosas directed the city government as well as Barangay Buhisan to pay the Nadela couple P200,000 for each of the victims as actual and compensatory damages.

The judge also ordered the defendants to pay the attorney's fees worth P30,000 and another P10,000 for the litigation expenses as well as to pay the cost of the litigation.

He also declared Menandro Diola, barangay chief of Buhisan, not liable in his personal capacity for damages arising from the incident. The judge, however, stressed that the city government is liable.

Hontanosas cited a provision under the New Civil Code that states that the city is liable for damages for the death or injuries of any person due to the defective condition of any public works under its control and supervision.

The couple alleged that the city government and the barangay neglected to place "danger signs" and install safety measures within the road construction area.

The site is a limestone quarry two meters wide and eight feet high. It is located along the newly opened mountain road with a 30-degree slope.

The court noted that prior to the incident, the city government supervised a barangay road construction project in Sitio Nazareth, Barangay Buhisan.

The road project cut through the slopes of the hilly portion of Buhisan and exposed a "conglomeratic" section of the Carcar formation that has a sandy matrix and terrace grace deposits.

Residents in the area resorted to quarrying the sand and gravel thus creating a hollow area. The road cut also left some overhanging materials in the process.

Ecija bishop calls jueteng patrons 'unchristian'

DAGUPAN CITY—For the nth time, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz has issued a pastoral letter on the illegal numbers game, telling his parishioners that patronizing jueteng is "unchristian."

"Persons who know anyone who indulges in the illegal numbers game but keep quiet and do nothing cannot call themselves Christians," Cruz said.

"You must not call yourselves Christians (because) a Christian is someone who loves others. Letting them (bet on jueteng) is in truth hating them because you allow *juetengeros* to steal their money (and) you allow them to covet the money of others," Cruz said in a pastoral letter to be read during masses in his diocese on Sunday.

Cruz, also chair of the Krusada ng Bayan-Jueteng Free Philippines, has been waging a battle against jueteng, which he described as a "racket that continues to fool the people."

"Please join me in the national and local effort to stop jueteng [illegible]is vice continues to fool people because we do not act against it. This racket makes jueteng lords very rich because we do not denounce them," he said in his letter.

The letter also blamed the people for their complacency and criticized jueteng lords and their protectors and promoters.

"Jueteng is a violation of the seventh commandment, 'Thou shall not steal,' and an offense against the tenth commandment, 'Thou shall not covet thy neighbors' goods,'" Cruz said.

"But it thrives in decent neighborhoods and in an upright community because good people do nothing about it."

He described jueteng as a "loud symbol of laziness for decent work and dependence on chance."

"It is a clear sign of deceit and corruption," he said.

Despite his tirades against the numbers game, Cruz said the game is still a "socio-moral plague" that thrives in communities, and that the financiers and their benefactors still say blatant lies and manufacture stories against him.

He said he is not affected by these stories. [illegible] looks to the time when "we can a[illegible] with legitimate pride and [illegible] honor that we finally have a jueteng-free Pangasinan." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Puffer fish kills 4 kids, hospitalizes 30 others

CEBU CITY—Four children died while almost 30 other persons were hospitalized after eating puffer fish also known as "boriring" in separate incidents in Lapulapu and Cebu cities on Sunday and Monday.

In Lapulapu City, three young siblings died while 21 others were brought to the hospitals last Sunday after eating puffer fish for lunch in Kaubian Island, a densely-populated islet one hour by boat from Mactan Island.

The fatalities were identified as Angela, 11, Stephen, 7 and Rosamarie, 3, all surnamed Estrera.

Stephen died on Sunday afternoon in the boat going to the hospital, while Angela and Rosemarie died on Monday morning and afternoon respectively at the government-run Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (VSMMC) in Cebu City.

Their elder sister Christina, 12, was under observation at the VSMMC. Their parents, Sanito, 57, and Thelma were brought to the Lapulapu District Hospital (LDH).

Fourteen victims including the neighbors of the couple were brought to the LDH while seven others were brought to the VSMMC.

Sanito said he was the one who cooked the puffer fish eaten by his family for lunch on Sunday. He said he had prepared and served puffer fish to his family many times before and nothing had happened to them.

In Cebu City, three-year-old Geralyn Garcia died in Alaska, Mambaling on Monday while 10 others including her one-year-old sister were brought to the Cebu City Medical Center (CCMC) for treatment after eating puffer fish.

Geralyn complained of dizziness at around 5 p.m. but her parents brought her to a faith healer instead of the hospital.

Geralyn's father, Renato, said they did not expect his daughter to be poisoned with the puffer fish. Geralyn died at around 6 p.m.

Geralyn's one-year-old sister Geneva and nine other relatives were later brought to the hospital because of severe stomachache and headache. Roberta Carolasan, 68, grandmother of Geralyn who cooked the puffer fish was also brought to the hospital.

Renato, who just took two pieces of the fish, was spared. Renato's wife, Corazon, a market vendor, was also spared because she was not around during their lunch.

Renato said the puffer fish they ate were given to them by a neighbor. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

City officials warn of more fish kills in the Davao River

DAVAO CITY—Another fish kill may occur in the Davao River if the city government does not install stricter measures to protect the tributary.

Various species of fish surfaced belly up in the river on Sunday after "sticky fluid" allegedly flowed into the river.

Councilor Isidro Ungab, chair of the Davao River Conservation Coordinating Committee, said it is high time the city council approved the Davao River Code.

During the council's session on Tuesday, Ungab blamed the city council for failing to act on his proposed code in 2001.

Under the code, 15-meter buffer zones would be set aside near residential, industrial and agricultural areas to filter wastes going to the river.

In Sunday's fish kill, unofficial tests conducted by the Davao City Water District showed traces of pesticides in the Davao River.

But the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources had yet to come out with the result of its tests even though it used devices similar to those used by DCWD.

Ungab said he could not do anything but wait for the BFAR result.

The city council agreed to conduct an inquiry aimed at unmasking those responsible for the fish kill. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Legal dispute threatens Baguio's source of water

BAGUIO CITY—A single mature tree can store 5,000 to 6,000 cubic meters of water, underscoring the importance of urban forest in a city like Baguio, which is dependent on aquifers for its water supply.

Albert Arenas, assistant manager of the Baguio Water District, said a 10- to 20-year-old tree could hold that much volume of water.

"If you cut down a single mature tree, you definitely lose the 5,000 to 6,000 cubic meters. This should make you appreciative of the value of trees in our watershed," Arenas said.

His statement came after the city's largest watershed, the Busol Watershed, faced the danger of being occupied because of a legal dispute between the BWD and the city government and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

The NCIP stopped the fencing of the Busol Watershed until the ancestral land claims there were resolved.

"If we cannot fence this, we may lose our watershed and our water. We really have to push through with the fencing," Arenas said.

He said the city needs 94,000 cubic meters of water a day but the BWD can only provide 22,000 cu. m.

"For the city to effectively provide water for all its people, it needs to pump out 50,000 to 60,000 cu. m. more," he said.

But the city has only groundwater as its source of water. Aside from Busol, its other watersheds are in Buyog, Crystal Cave, Sto. Tomas and Camp 8.

The Camp 8 watershed includes the Baguio General Hospital reservation, which can be affected by the city government's plan to build a flyover there despite residents' opposition.

But Arenas said the effect on the water table would be minimized because the flyover's posts would be set up in the middle of the road. Digging for these can, however, alter the water table.

Another disputed watershed within Camp John Hay is also in danger should the city pushes through with the construction of a road that will pass through the watershed of Happy Hallow Village. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

British teachers, studes build schools for Aeta kids

FORDING rivers and scrambling up mountain tracks, British Council Director, Gill Westaway, last week opened three schools for the Aetas living in remote areas around Tarlac.

Known as Traditional Origins Ethnic Education Schools (TOES), these buildings are constructed, owned and maintained by the villagers themselves.

Teachers are supplied by the Department of Education, according to a news release.

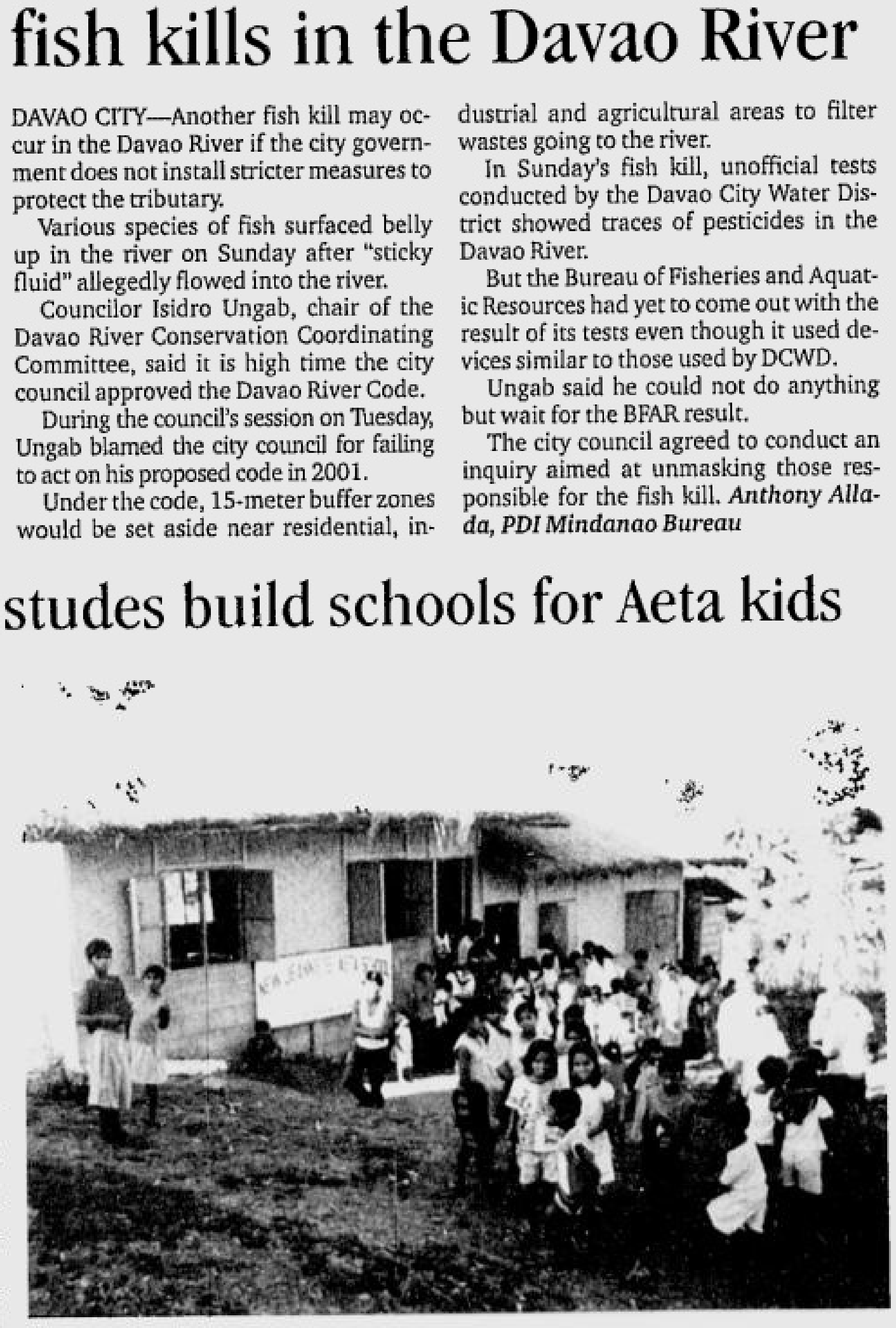
Teachers and their students from a school in southern England and the remote Shetland Islands of Scotland raised funds to build Fleet and Happy Hansel schools in Dueg, San Clemente.

"At the heart of the British Council's mission is a desire to create learning opportunities between the peoples of our two countries," said Westaway during the opening ceremony in Dueg.

The children's enthusiasm for learning was palpable as donations of books and writing materials were handed over to the teachers in preparation for the opening of schools in June.

Some 20 TOES schools have been constructed since the project began in 1991 after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo displaced thousands of Aeta folk.

Westaway accompanied members of the Entrepreneur Volunteer Assistance Charity Foundation and the National Commission for Indigenous People during the opening of the schools.


AETA children in Dueg, San Clemente, Tarlac gather in front of a school donated by British and Scottish teachers and their students.

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

Editor **Jun Bandayrel** ◎ *Bureau Chief* **Floreño G. Solmirano**

PART of the Mt. Makiling Forest Reserve in Los Baños, Laguna. PDI PHOTO

Protecting Makiling reserve a tough climb

By Romulo Ponte
Los Baños, Laguna

THE AGENCY mandated to take care of the Mt. Makiling Forest Reserve (MFR) is facing tough challenges in maintaining ecological balance in the area.

The 4,224.37-ha reserve, which was established through Proclamation No. 106 issued in 1910 by then Governor General W. Cameron Forbes, is now home to about 1,225 farmer-settlers who equally assert domain over it.

Dr. Edwino S. Fernando, director of the Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems (MCME), said the farmers were claiming "inalienable" rights to cultivate portions of the reserve for their livelihood.

Makiling, which covers an area of 24,985 ha, was given special consideration among all the Philippine mountains during last year's celebration of the International Year of Mountains, according to Fernando. The celebration was participated in by agencies and organizations concerned with mountains, like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Tourism, and the Mountaineering Federation of the Philippines.

"These are the groups—including mountain climbers—that are helping clean up areas in Mt. Makiling. They [members] would climb mountains and pick up the garbage," Fernando said.

Migrants

Lowland farmers have been moving into the Makiling reserve since 1898. A study conducted by the College of Environmental Science and Management (Cesam) of the University of the Philippines-Los Baños a few years ago revealed that the population in the forest reserve had grown 20 percent yearly over the last 10 years.

Latest UPLB reports showed that about 45 percent or 1,899 ha of MFR land had lost its forest cover and were instead used for farming.

But the settlers, according to Fernando, were already given stern instructions not to build new houses and not to expand their farming areas. They were also given guidelines to venture into agro-forestry so as to enhance the sustainability of forest resources.

"Even the cutting of trees by farmers within the MFR is not permitted without clearance from legitimate authorities. Once anyone is caught cutting trees and building new houses, we will file charges against him in court," Fernando said.

The settlers have also been instructed to report new intruders to the MFR so that action may be taken against them.

A document obtained from the Cesam said bluntly that reserve authorities may even "arrest without warrant" anybody caught cutting or causing destruction to the reserved forests.

Republic Act No. 6967, which was signed into law by then President Corazon Aquino in 1989, vested "control, jurisdiction and administration of the MFR" anew on the UPLB. That authority had long been enjoyed by the university since 1960 by virtue of Proclamation No. 692 issued by then President Carlos P. Garcia.

Resistance

UPLB officials earlier found that not all farmers inside the forest reserve area agreed with the occupancy conditions or guidelines.

On June 18, 1996, farmers resisted UPLB supervision of the reserve, especially when the university tried to implement the Makiling Forest Reserve Master Plan. The UPLB Perspective, official student publication, had quoted some of the organized farmers that the plan was "not clear to them."

The Nagkakaisang Magsasaka sa Pagtataguyod ng Bundok Makiling, represented by Zacarias Manalo, said the university did not recognize its members as legitimate residents of MFR.

An officer of the Kaisahan ng Samahan ng mga Magsasaka sa Bundok Makiling, a federation of seven farmer organizations, claimed that "we have inherited this land from our forefathers. It is from here that we get our source of livelihood."

Most likely, Fernando knew these realities too well. In a speech during the launching of the IYM in January last year, he said: "Mountains are homes to nearly 10 percent of the Philippine population. No less than 30 percent of the population also depends fully or partly on mountain resources for a living."

Risks

But he also said that "the risks associated with mountain environments have grown rapidly with increasing [number of] residents and tourist populations, intensification and diversification of land uses and infrastructure development."

Forest guards deployed at the MFR regularly monitor violations that destroyed the forests in the reserved area, Fernando said. "We will not hesitate to sue them [violators] in court," he warned.

The MFR head, though emphasizing to strictly implement conservation measures of the entire reserved area, said there were plenty of reasons to promote the area for eco-tourism.

In its brochure, the MCME stated that the MFR was intended primarily for "training [. . .] for the advancement of scientific knowledge on forestry and natural resources."

Located 65 km southeast of Manila, the MFR is bounded by Laguna and Batangas, covering portions of the towns of Los Baños, Calamba, Bay [Laguna] and Sto. Tomas [Batangas].

The entire MFR area is a watershed zone. It has 60 perennial and intermittent streams, eight water intakes tapping the flow of perennial streams for domestic uses.

The brochure listed outdoor recreation and ecotourism points of interest, which include large areas of natural forest cover, mud spring, glat rocks, a panoramic view from the peaks, nature trails, flora and fauna, the Makiling Botanic Gardens, Center for Philippine Raptors, Makiling Rain Forest Park, Makiling Experimental and Demonstration Forest and the National Arts Center.

There are 2,038 species of flowering plants and ferns, 211 species of mosses, hundreds of species of algae and fungi, and mixed dipterocarp rain and mossy forests. There are also 45 species of mammals, 181 species of birds, 65 species of reptiles, 22 species of amphibians and hundreds of species of invertebrates.

Proclamation

To prevent the "unnecessary" development of Makiling, which may destroy the legendary mountain and eventually affect the MFR, then President Fidel V. Ramos signed Proclamation Order No. 1257 "designating certain areas surrounding the Makiling Forest Reserve as buffer zone."

The order was aimed at guiding local government units, entrepreneurs, developers, businessmen, landowners and other individuals on the use of the buffer zone.

Spirit of volunteerism still alive

By Marlon Ramos
Los Baños, Laguna

THE SPIRIT of volunteerism did it for Makiling. And fortunately, hikers have also learned their lessons.

Officials of the Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems (MCME) said 200 volunteer-guides from various nongovernment organizations in Los Baños, Laguna, mostly from the University of the Philippines, helped prevent major accidents involving 7,000 hikers who flocked to the legendary Mt. Makiling during the Holy Week.

"Hikers and campers who came here last year understood the rules and regulations governing the activities inside the Makiling forest reserve. Unlike in Mt. Banahaw, trekkers here had undergone a basic seminar before they could enter the mountain," said Roberto Cereno, program leader of Make It Makiling 2003.

Close coordination with the municipal government of Los Banos and the local police had also helped minimize untoward incidents, Cereno added.

However, there were some who forgot. On Holy Wednesday, police arrested four teenagers, all from Cabuyao, Laguna, for illegal possession and use of marijuana inside the Makiling area. The suspects were detained at the municipal police station.

Cereno added that unlike Banahaw, which draws thousands of pilgrims and devotees of different religious orders, Makiling is famous for its eco-tourism sites, which visitors have come to respect.

Cereno noted that they had issued 102 claim cards for confiscated items, 50 of which were bladed weapons. Last year, they issued 360 cards.

The MCME, which governs the mountain, prohibits carrying of deadly and bladed weapons in the area, as well as liquor and illegal drugs. It also forbids cutting trees for tent pegs and bar campfires inside the mountain.

Volunteers said they had collected some 600 kilograms of garbage returned by hikers at entry points.

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8th Filipino down with SARS in HK

From page A1

Despite the rising cases of SARS, Filipino domestic helpers continued to flock to the Philippine Consulate office to get their contracts renewed or to change to a new employer.

"*Siempre natatakot din ako saka yung pamilya ko sa Pilipinas. Kaya lang wala naman akong magagawa dahil tatlo ang anak ko at ako lang ang nagpapa-aral sa kanila* (Of course I'm scared and so is my family in the Philippines. But I have no choice because I have three children and I'm sending them to school)," said Shirley Ramos, 32, who was one of those in the long queue to get her papers processed.

Ramos said she has been working in Hong Kong for four years. Her current contract has expired, but her Chinese employer retained her, which means she needs to stay in Hong Kong for another two years.

"*Ginagawa ko naman ang lahat para protektahan ang sarili ko saka hindi na ako lumalabas masyado, kaya siguro safe naman ako* (I'm doing everything to protect myself and I don't go out much; I'm probably safe)," Ramos said.

As of yesterday, the total number of SARS cases here reached more than 1,400, with 99 deaths.

In view of the rising SARS cases, the Consul General urged Filipinos in Hong Kong to prioritize their health and take the necessary precautions to protect themselves against the deadly virus.

Some of the measures taken by the Consulate to protect Filipinos in Hong Kong include giving out free Vitamin C and health leaflets on SARS. As part of standard procedures, all staff and visitors to the Consulate are also given free protective masks.

SARS BRIEFS

Chinese PM going to Bangkok

CHINESE Premier Wen Jiabao will join Southeast Asian leaders in Bangkok next week to find ways to tackle the SARS virus that has killed more than 200 people and hurt the region's economies.

A senior Thai foreign ministry official, who declined to be identified, told reporters Wen would meet leaders of the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) at the one-day meeting on April 29 in Bangkok.

"There will be two sessions on that day—one among Asean leaders and the other between Asean and China," said the official involved in preparations for the meeting.

Asean groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. *Reuters*

Taipei hospital staff undergo tests

STAFF at a Taipei hospital were undergoing medical tests after at least seven of their colleagues showed symptoms of SARS.

The suspected infections were thought to have originated with a woman who visited the Taipei Municipal Hoping Hospital.

A hospital doctor who treated the woman on April 7 began coughing late Monday. A check on other hospital staff found two nurses, a specialist, two laundry workers and an administrator also showing symptoms of SARS.

With the exception of one nurse, who only showed minor symptoms, all Hoping Hospital staff were taken to other hospitals for quarantine and treatment.

The hospital and the nearby Nanmen Primary School were disinfected yesterday. The hospital refused to take in new patients, and the outpatient department was closed.

Investigations are still under way to determine whether the seven hospital employees really had SARS, and how the woman who visited the hospital might have been infected.

Taiwan's government has also started taking the temperatures of all arriving and departing travelers. *AP*

Violators face jail term

AUSTRALIA'S most populous state added the SARS virus to a list of dangerous, communicable diseases, allowing authorities to fine or jail potential sufferers for six months if they refuse treatment.

New South Wales state, which includes the island continent's main city Sydney, said it had also identified up to 900 spare hospital beds in case of a major SARS outbreak.

Australia has escaped relatively unscathed from the disease. On Wednesday, health authorities reported the country's fourth probable case of SARS, a 45-year-old woman from the state of Queensland who has since recovered.

The New South Wales state government listed SARS alongside tuberculosis and typhoid as a so-called category four medical condition, meaning health authorities can force sufferers to undergo testing and treatment, and to be placed in quarantine.

Patients who refuse to be isolated can be fined up to A$5,500 ($3,400) or jailed for up to six months. *Reuters*

Temperature tests 2X a day

HALF a million students in Singapore will take their own temperature twice daily while at school, in yet another bid by the government to stop the spread of SARS.

Digital thermometers or "fever strips" will be given to students who will take their own temperature and record it in logbooks, guided by teachers, the Ministry of Education said.

Sick children will be isolated to prevent the spread of SARS, which has infected 186 people in the island republic and killed 14 in the past month.

The screening begins on April 30 and will be introduced throughout the school system over three weeks. It will affect 500,000 students aged 7 to 18. *Reuters*

DOUBLE WHAMMY

China's AIDS villages brace for SARS attack

CHINA'S AIDS villages are bracing for another health crisis—SARS, which coupled with AIDS could wipe out huge segments of the population.

"If SARS hits HIV areas, that will decimate all the people who are HIV positive," said Ray Yip, head of AIDS prevention for the United Nations Children's Fund's China office. "Any (illness) can be exaggerated in these people. It will kill them."

So far no SARS cases have been found in the AIDS villages, but lack of awareness on the disease could change that fast.

China's poor agricultural provinces have dozens of villages devastated by AIDS. For years, villagers sold blood to unsanitary collection stations approved by the government; beginning in the late '90s they got full-blown AIDS.

Many villagers are clinging to a thin lifeline and the pneumonia-like SARS could deal the final blow.

"Their immune systems are already severely weakened by AIDS. If they get SARS, they will definitely be doomed," said Wu Guofeng, a doctor at the Shangcai County People's Hospital.

Shangcai is one of the counties worst-affected by AIDS.

In the county's Wenlou village, farmers are just now learning about SARS.

"Now we are more afraid of SARS than AIDS," said farmer Cheng Yanzhang. "It's more contagious than AIDS. With AIDS, we can live for a while. With SARS, we can die in just a few days."

Henan province in central China has reported three cases of SARS so far, but even local doctors question that number. They believe that like most parts in China, Henan either does not know or does not want to reveal the full extent of SARS' impact on their jurisdiction for fear it could lead to a loss of investments and other business.

One of the three Henan SARS cases is right at the AIDS villages' doorstep. It's a patient in Zhoumadian city, which encompasses Shangcai county. *AFP*

SARS compounds the travails of an AIDS village in central China's Henan province. SARS and AIDS, health authorities say, could wipe out huge segments of China's villages where AIDS is prevalent. AFP

Pinoy doctor in Toronto is alive

From page A1

Canada who died of SARS ... contracted the disease from another SARS patient who has also died and who was a member of the Philippine Roman Catholic community, Bukas Loob sa Diyos."

Agence France Presse, on the other hand, based the report of the doctor's death on a statement made by Chito Navarro of the Department of Health's SARS task force.

The doctor contracted the viral disease from an elderly member of the Bukas Loob sa Diyos, according to his Toronto-based secretary, who declined to be identified. His patient later died of the mysterious disease.

[The INQUIRER is withholding the identities of the doctor and other patients suffering from SARS to shield their families from further distress.]

Critical care

Reached by the INQUIRER at 5:35 p.m. yesterday, the hospital, through its telephone operator, confirmed that the doctor was confined there as a patient. The operator, who identified himself only as Eric, connected the line to the Critical Care Unit.

But a female nurse, who answered the phone at the Critical Care Unit, refused to confirm if the doctor was recuperating there. "I am sorry I can't give you that kind of information," she said.

Asked if it was possible to speak to the doctor, the nurse said, "I am sorry [but the] patients here are not able to speak,'" and hung up.

A lot of people were concerned about the doctor's condition and they kept calling the hospital to ask how he was, she said. She said they might have gotten confused because no name of the fatality was available.

Geraldine Alcalde, a former radio reporter in Bacolod City who is now based in Toronto, reported to the INQUIRER that the doctor, who had been treating her for asthma, died last Friday. She said a nurse at a Toronto hospital confirmed the report, but hospital authorities later denied having treated the doctor.

Other patients

Alcalde had said the doctor contracted SARS from an elderly Filipino patient who had earlier died of the viral disease.

The doctor's secretary confirmed that he had treated the elderly, a member of the Bukas Loob sa Diyos, who died of SARS. The elderly's son, who was believed to have also contracted the virus, was also a patient of the doctor, she said.

Two other patients in the doctor's clinic were afflicted with SARS, she said. Six members of the Bukas Loob sa Diyos were also suffering from SARS, she said.

When the INQUIRER again contacted the hospital last night and asked to be connected to whoever could answer questions regarding the doctor's condition, the operator placed the call to the public information department, but only an answering machine was left open to receive messages.

Anti-SARS measures fail; 16 more dead

From page A1

least 252 people have died from the illness and over 4,300 have been infected in at least 30 countries.

Gloomy report

The scale of the task ahead was outlined in a gloomy situation report by the US Centers for Disease Control.

"We still have no capacity to predict where it's going or how large it's ultimately going to be," said CDC head Julie Gerberding. "We're very sobered by the ongoing transmission in parts of the world, including Hong Kong where very, very appropriate public health steps have been taken, and yet the epidemic is continuing to evolve there."

Much of the focus, however, is now on China where authorities have adopted draconian measures to prevent SARS from spreading into the vast countryside and taking a hold on rural areas.

Severely criticized for its failure to act sooner, the central government this week launched frenzied efforts to report the extent of the disease. Every town throughout China had been given "strict orders" to report SARS cases in all hospitals, and tens of thousands of people had been mobilized for the effort.

Roundup, arrests

In Beijing, along with Hong Kong the worst affected city in the world, the government dispatched hundreds of investigators to round up citizens with flu-like symptoms even as police arrested several people suspected of fabricating SARS rumors on the Internet.

The city's primary and secondary schools were shut down, and 1.7 million students were sent home for at least two weeks. Tests were postponed indefinitely.

The central government has also cancelled domestic travel tours.

"Unceasingly, the investigations into the epidemic must identify all persons with symptoms, and not let one case escape," said Liu Qi, Communist Party chief in the capital.

China has recorded 2,305 confirmed cases since the disease first emerged last November in the southern province of Guangdong where the virus was spread to different countries by international travellers.

Singapore

In Singapore where the third biggest SARS outbreak has occurred, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong vowed to push legislation allowing the government to jail people who break isolation orders and put the community at risk.

Fourteen people have died and 1,798 people have been put under mandatory home quarantine as a precaution to contain the spread of the disease. More confinement orders are still being issued as contacts are identified.

Quarantined homes are monitored by surveillance cameras. People who have broken quarantine have been slapped with the wrist tags that send an alert to authorities if they go out again.

In an open letter published Wednesday, Goh said those under quarantine who would not answer their phone when authorities called would be tagged with an electronic bracelet "whether or not they have broken quarantine."

When parliament convenes on Thursday, it is expected to pass amendments to the Infectious Diseases Act that would allow authorities to impose a fine on quarantine violators without them having to be charged in court.

Fines range from S$5,000 (US$2,825) for first time violators and S$10,000 dollars for the second offense.

Prison terms would be meted out to those who breach the quarantine.

Border checks

Singapore authorities on Wednesday started using state-of-the-art thermal imaging scanners at Malaysian border points. Earlier, authorities ordered the quarantine of 125 Malaysian truck drivers who recently delivered vegetables to Singapore's Pasir Panjang Wholesale Center, the city-state's largest distribution center for fruits and vegetables and the site of a SARS outbreak.

Authorities in Malaysia. where two people have died of SARS, on Wednesday vowed to tighten health checks at the border with Singapore after at least two people with symptoms of SARS slipped through screening nets.

Health Ministry Deputy Director General Ismail Merican said the two Malaysians developed flu-like symptoms early this month while they were in Singapore, but traveled back to their home states in Malaysia before seeking treatment. Both have since been hospitalized, though neither has been confirmed as having SARS.

Malaysia and Singapore are linked by a causeway crossed by about 90,000 people a day, posing a huge logistical problem for officials looking for symptoms such as fever, coughing and breathing difficulties.

France and the Australian state of New South Wales said they would add SARS to a list of dangerous diseases thereby allowing the forcible hospitalization of victims. Mauritius also enacted new quarantine measures.

Canada

Canada, the worst affected area outside Asia with more than 300 cases, announced a 15th death and eight new cases. Ontario's health ministry announced it was bringing in fresh recruits to help the small army of people who have been working round-the-clock for more than five weeks in an elusive bid to contain the spread of SARS in Canada's largest city.

Health Minister Tony Clement said up to 100 additional people will be reassigned to Toronto public health units to relieve the exhausted staff there who have been trying to halt the spread of SARS by identifying people at risk and requiring them to isolate themselves in their homes for the duration of the virus's incubation period.

Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, the World Health Organization will investigate a massive outbreak of SARS in one apartment complex, saying it was "not fully convinced" by a government report blaming sewage leaks and other forms of transmission, newspapers reported Wednesday.

Hong Kong officials said last week that SARS spread through the Amoy Gardens apartments, sickening more than 300 people, in part through contaminated sewage droplets that filtered in through the drains in one building.

SARS was brought to Block E of the complex by a man who also had kidney disease, and it was apparently also spread through person-to-person contact and in common areas such as elevators and lobbies, Hong Kong said. Rats and cockroaches might also have picked up the virus on their bodies, officials said.

But the WHO will send Canadian and Australian building environment consultants to inspect the infected building to assess Hong Kong's findings.

The WHO advised people worldwide earlier this month to avoid unnecessary travel to Hong Kong — the Amoy Gardens outbreak was one reason. Hong Kong wants the advisory lifted, after seeing its travel and tourism industry devastated. *Reports from AFP, AP and Reuters*

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Tourist arrivals in March down

PHILIPPINE tourist arrivals in March fell 9.9 percent from a year ago to 157,036 visitors due to concerns about the SARS scare and effects of the Iraq war.

The Department of Tourism said the SARS outbreak had caused fear among travelers, preventing them from leaving their countries.

Visitors from Hong Kong, one of those hardest hit by the SARS crisis, fell 39.3 percent to 9,806 visitors in March. Arrivals from Taiwan fell 17.7 percent to 6,328 and those from Japan dropped 6.3 percent to 28,807.

The DOT said continued fears of terrorist attacks against American citizens due to the US invasion on Iraq also led to dismal tourist arrivals in March. Tourists from the United States accounted for 31,236, or 19.9 percent, of the arrivals in March, down 22.8 percent from 40,485 a year ago.

"It is noted that Hong Kong and Taiwan... recorded declines in arrivals," the tourism department said.

Between January and March, however, tourist arrivals were up slightly by 2.6 percent to 495,390, the DOT said. *AFP*

SARS-like symptoms down X-ray technician

From page A1

fifth "suspected" SARS case who could have been infected by the nursing aide who returned from Toronto earlier this month to attend to her ailing father.

The four other suspected cases are the nursing aide's father, a brother-in-law who served as her driver, an 11-year-old boy and a 2-year-old child. All developed a fever days after they came in close contact with the nursing aide; they were placed in isolation at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) in Alabang.

Two of the X-ray technicians have been placed under quarantine in the hospital's infirmary. They have not manifested any SARS-related symptoms but were in contact with the X-ray technician when she developed a fever.

The 39-year-old technician took the chest X-ray of the nursing aide on April 14. The nursing aide, who was then in isolation at the San Lazaro Hospital (SLH) for SARS-related symptoms, died of pneumonia the following day.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said the sick nursing aide was not taken out of her isolation room; the X-ray machine was taken to her room instead.

The technician wore a protective mask and a hospital gown when she went inside the quarantine room, Dayrit said.

The World Health Organization has been recommending the use of personal protective equipment for all hospital staff who have to go inside SARS isolation rooms. The equipment are: N95 mask (which has a higher filtering capacity than an ordinary surgical mask), gloves, goggles, disposable gown, apron and footwear that can be decontaminated.

Dayrit yesterday ordered all hospitals not to take any shortcuts in handling suspected SARS cases.

The X-ray technician developed a fever, muscle pain and body weakness last Friday and was placed in an isolation room at the SLH.

She is now "doing fine," Dayrit said.

"She has a fever, but she is in stable condition. She does not manifest any other symptoms of SARS," Dayrit told the INQUIRER.

The father of Adela health authorities said, died of colon cancer on Tuesday while under isolation. His blood samples and that of the nursing aide's have been sent abroad for SARS confirmatory testing.

RITM director Remigio Olveda said there were actually nine people who had close contact with the nursing aide and who were placed in isolation at the RITM but only the four had developed a fever.

The 11-year-old boy and another relative (who had no fever) were released from the government hospital on Tuesday.

Six more contacts of the nursing aide remain in isolation at the RITM, including the brother-in-law and the 2-year-old. Their quarantine ends on April 26.

"The way things are going, there seems to be no immediate fear of a SARS outbreak. If (the nursing aide's) contacts really contracted the disease, they should be manifesting SARS symptoms by this time," said Olveda.

About 250 other relatives, friends and neighbors of the nursing aide had been asked to undergo a voluntary quarantine in the nurse's hometown of Alcala, Pangasinan. Dayrit said they should have no cause for concern because so far none of them have developed SARS symptoms. *With a report from AP*

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Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

Paragua surprises Torre

IM Mark Paragua stunned GM Eugene Torre to register his third straight victory and move to solo fourth spot after 18 rounds of the Shell National Open Rapid Chess grand finals yesterday at the DILG Multi-Purpose Hall in Quezon City. It was the 18-year-old Paragua's first win over Torre in five meetings. Torre dropped to solo third. Bong Villamayor retained the lead followed by Joey Antonio with four rounds left.

₱1M DOWN THE DRAIN

Arafura Games off due to SARS

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE DREADED SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) has claimed its biggest casualty in sports so far–the 35-nation Arafura Games in Darwin, Australia.

Considered as the Olympics of Asia and the Pacific, the biennial meet is the latest sporting event that got cancelled due to the mysterious disease that has gripped the entire world in terror for the past month.

The Philippines was supposed to send more than 260 athletes in the Games with most of the delegation members coming from Mindanao, which has an existing sports, cultural and economic exchange with Australia's Northern Territory.

Philippine Sports Commissioner Butch Ramirez said he received a letter from Northern Territory chief minister Clare Martin and sports minister John Ehkit, who cited the continued uncertainty about the availability of international teams and ongoing health concerns surrounding SARS.

The Games, where our very own Liza Danila sparkled with nine golds medals in the swimming pool in 1997, were supposed to be held May 17-25.

Ramirez said PSC chair Eric Buhain accepted the cancellation with deep regret considering that the country already spent more than P1 million for the national athletes' preparation.

The Philippine delegation was composed of 110 athletes and officials from Mindanao, 75 from Visayas, 75 from the different national sports associations and six from Luzon.

Though there hasn't been any SARS case in Australia yet, Ramirez said the Australian officials were wary of the risk it would pose on their citizens considering that at least 3,000 athletes and officials mostly from SARS-plagued Asian countries confirmed their participation.

SARS has killed at least 230 people, mostly in Hong Kong and China, and infected at least 4,000 people worldwide.

Registrations for the eight-day Arafura Games had fallen by half, from about 5,000 in 2001 to 2,280 this year, as a number of teams and individuals withdrew amid the SARS outbreak.

The Judo and Lifesaving events had earlier been canceled because of declining registrations but it is the first major sporting event canceled in Australia due to SARS.

Other events canceled in the Asia-Pacific region include the women's world ice hockey championships in Beijing and the Shanghai and Singapore legs of the International Rugby Board's World Sevens series. The Asian Football Confederation has canceled an East Asian soccer meet and postponed qualifiers for the women's World Cup and the 2004 Olympics.

Duremdes steers SLR past Alaska

By June Navarro

GAMES TOMORROW
(Philsports Arena)
5:00 p.m.—Shell vs FedEx
7:30 p.m.—Red Bull vs Talk N Text

IF THERE'S one team Kenneth Duremdes loves to beat, then it's got to be the Alaska Aces.

Duremdes did just that as he steered the Sta. Lucia Realtors to a gut-wrenching 94-90 win over the Aces in the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup last night at the Philsports Arena.

"It was very sweet. Anybody who got traded wants to prove something against his former team. That alone motivated me to work extra hard against Alaska," said Duremdes, who won four championships with the Aces.

Alaska shipped Duremdes, the league's MVP in 1998, to Sta. Lucia Realty right before the start of this year's Annual Rookie Draft in exchange for the Realtors' first-round pick and a switching of both teams' second-round picks.

Incidentally, the rookie picked by Alaska to take the place of Duremdes was the one who heatedly crossed paths with the former Adamson University standout.

Rookie Brandon Cablay, selected fifth overall by the Aces in the first round, engaged Duremdes in a verbal tussle while exchanging three-pointers in the final quarter.

The Realtors notched their sixth victory in 12 games, while the Aces, whose four-game streak got halted, slipped to 8-4.

Purefoods recovered from a two-game skid after whipping San Miguel Beer, 82-72, in the second game.

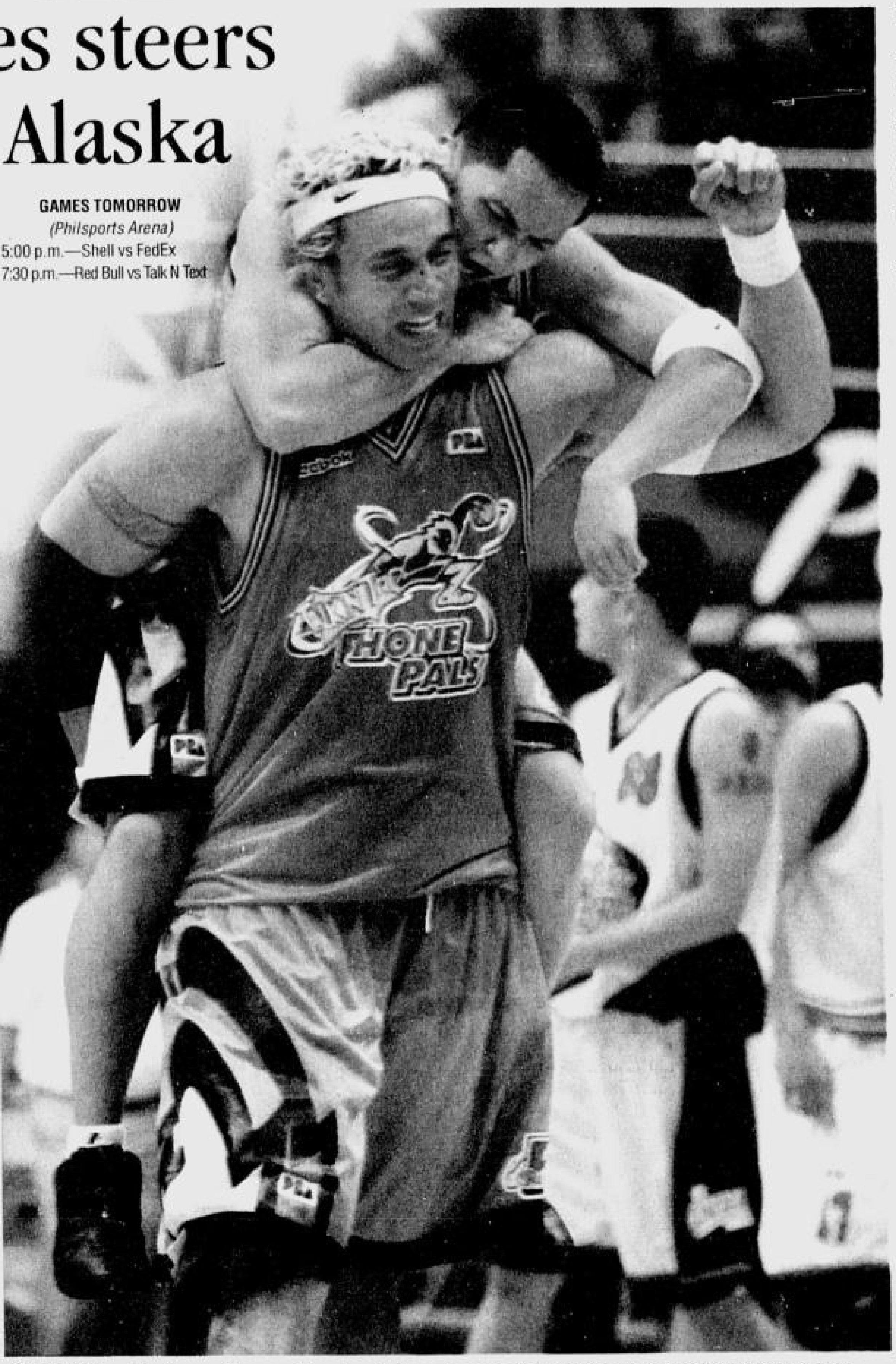
Scores:

STA. LUCIA 94—Duremdes 25, Espino 23, Aquino 22, Adriano 14, Francisco 6, Mendoza 4, Bat-Og 0, Yu 0, Webb 0, Ong 0, Tan 0.

ALASKA 90—Cablay 19, Peek 18, Cortez 12, Camaso 11, Duat 10, Arigo 9, Allado 7, Noble 4, Padilla 0, Del Rosario 0, Feihl 0.

Quarters: 17-20, 35-44, 68-63, 94-90.

PBL TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
2:00 p.m.—Welcoat vs Blu Star;
4:00 p.m.—John-O vs Montaña



JUBILANT rookie Jimmy Alapag rides piggyback on teammate Asi Taulava after Talk N Text downed Barangay Ginebra, 90-87, during the replay of their match last Tuesday in the Samsung PBA All Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

De Villas make move in Jr World

By Jong Arcano

SISTERS Linnel and Debbie de Villa are providing the sideshow to what has become a coming-out party for the new jungolf stars in the Callaway Junior World national qualifying tournament in various venues.

Yesterday, the De Villa sisters strode past the favorites in their respective divisions with solid rounds and put themselves in strong contention to make it to the elite Philippine delegation for the world's most prestigious jungolf meet in San Diego.

Linnel, an incoming sophomore at Poveda, built a three-shot lead over Geleen Handog with her 90-172. Not to be outdone, Linnel's little sister Debbie of the Greenhills Christian School inched two strokes ahead of Mia Piccio with a 77-162 at the Southwoods Legends.

While the De Villas got themselves a big fight ahead, Dottie Ardina, Jik Jik Abdon, Kristina Potenciano and Jayvee Agojo seem to have nailed their slots early in this event serving as the third leg of the Samsung Jungolf Tour.

As Class D play resumed after being postponed by a sudden downpour at the Riviera executive course, Ardina wasted no time in racing to a 22-stroke lead with rounds of 61-56 for a 117 total. Andrea Legaspi was at 145 after scoring 72-73.

Abdon was even hotter with his second straight sub-par round of 70 ushering him to a hefty 17-shot lead boys Class C at the Southwoods Legends.

Jayvie Agojo's superb consistency is setting her up for another blowout victory. She zoomed ahead by 10 in girls Class A with her second straight 73 for 146 total, leaving behind Matet Salivio who struggled with a 79 for 156.

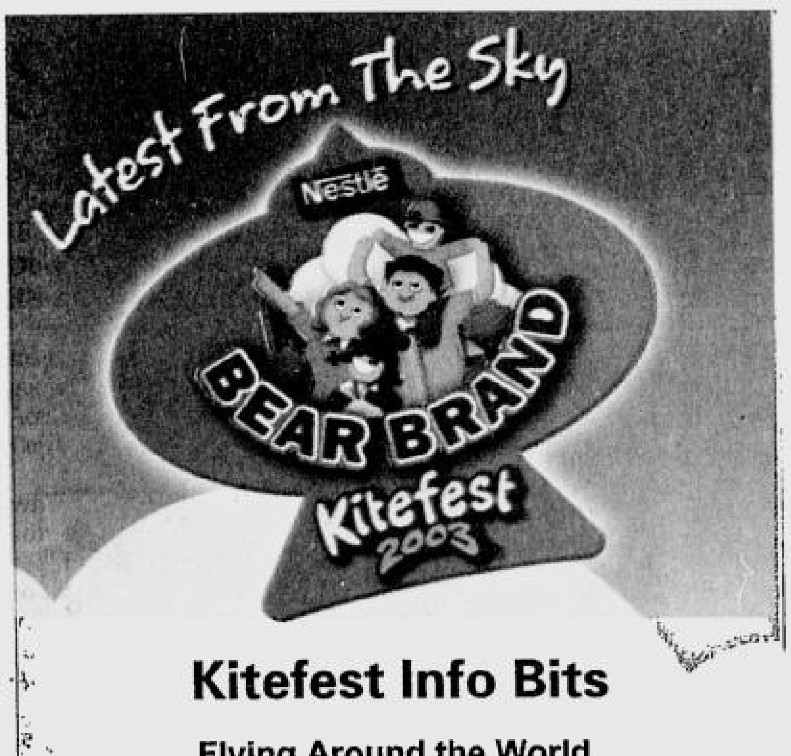
Potenciano's 57 and 113 total gave her a nine-shot advantage over Andie Unson in girls Class E. There was a three-way tie in boys Class E involving JR Gonzales, Miguel Tabuena and Bino dela Paz.

Golf fund-raiser at W'Wack

THE PHILIPPINE Bar Association Golf Invitational reels off tomorrow (Friday, April 25) at the west course of Wack Wack. Tee-off time is 8-11 a.m.

The organizing committee headed by Rolando dela Cuesta and tournament chair Hector Martinez got the support of several companies to provide the prize package and boost the PBA funds in providing free legal aid to deserving indigents.

San Miguel Corp., Pagcor and GMA Network are the major sponsors. Aside from Directories Philippines Corp., lawyer Rodolfo Gamboa, Baguio Country Club and Burlington Socks. Minor sponsors are Castillo Laman Tan Pantaleon & San Jose, Barcelona Barcelona & Magdamit, Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura Sayoc & Delos Angeles, Planton Martinez Flores San Pedro & Leano, Castro Cadiz & Carag, Abello Concepcion Regala & Cruz, Sycip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan, Quasha Ancheta Peña & Nolasco, Siguion Reyna Montecillo & Ongsiako.



Latest From The Sky
Nestlé BEAR BRAND Kitefest 2003

Kitefest Info Bits

Flying Around the World

In China, the ninth day of the month is a "Kite Day" and is considered a big holiday.

Balinese Hindus believe that kite-flying is one of the favorite hobbies of their gods.

In the traditional Korean kite-flying season, kites with the words "Bad Luck Away and Good Luck Stay" are flown as high as the line will allow and then released. It is believed that each of these freed kites will carry away its owner's bad luck.

In Santiago de Secatepequez, Guatemala, people celebrate "All Saints Day" by flying large circular kites over the graves of the departed, "to release their souls".

Kite "dog fights" are popular in eastern parts of the world, especially in India and Japan. In the competition, kites with ground glass glued to their lines try to cut the lines of other kites, sending them crashing down. The last kite left flying is declared the winner.

Watch out for BEAR BRAND KITEFEST 2003!
Happening next at Baguio on April 27, 2003.

Tubod's Helen in Imelda

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE FEAR of a terrorist attack is finally gone?

I pose the question in the wake of Eric Buhain's assurances that the Palarang Pambansa will finally push through in Tubod, Lanao del Norte, on May 4-11. Eric knows where he speaks of. As the PSC czar, Eric has the moral authority to say if it is go or not.

Still, my answer is, the fear will always be there. Mindanao is a strife-torn land and Tubod was a recent scene itself of a terrorist-inspired incident. Right at the arena where competitions are set to be played during the week-long Games.

Ate Glo herself has placed Davao and the city's environs under a state of emergency following several bomb blasts that killed more than 30 civilians, notably at both Davao's airport and international seaport. Just the other day, another terrorist-triggered blast injured four marine soldiers who were part of Ate Glo's advance party in Pikit, North Cotabato.

I am not trying to become Mr. Doomsday. I will not even dissuade our athletes and officials from going to Tubod.

The point I am trying to drive at is, in Mindanao the terrorist scare is for real. If the Palaro is scheduled for play, say, in Bangued, Abra, I will say without thinking twice that, yes, let's do it there. Bangued is as safe a place as Vienna in Austria.

The papers have also reported that no less than 1,400 soldiers will be deployed in Tubod in a bid to ensure the safety of at least 5,000 athletes. Fine. What a commendable move. I even heard a top sports official say the rebels from a secessionist Muslim group from Mindanao have expressed their willingness to "hold their punches (guns/bombs?)" while the Palaro is on. If true, I raise a glass to that. In abnormal times, a promise is more than the equivalent of a ray of hope.

Ah, hope. We can only hope, really.

Hope that nothing untoward will happen from May 4 to May 11.

Hope that the 1,400 or so soldiers will really be dispatched for the Palaro.

Hope that the 1,400 or so soldiers are well-trained at foiling would-be terrorists during the 7-day Games.

But safety is something that can't be guaranteed by any might made by man. Only God can guarantee safety. A fatalistic approach, you say? Not really. The Yanks have a way of saying it: If you gotta go, you gotta go.

To lick fear, like fear. Listen: Fear is something we just can't strike out from our hearts. It is as endemic as a child's madness with a toy balloon. And, like taxes, there is that fear we must learn to live with: Death. Inescapable.

Some people fear riding a plane. That's because they fear death. Again, listen: If a columnist starts to fear libel, he/she should immediately quit writing a column. If a runner fears defeat, in any form that is, he/she should better stop running and plant camote.

If there's someone worth our handshake when the Palaro is finally on, it should go to Lanao del Norte Gov. Imelda Dimaporo. The lady, whom I have yet to meet but I'd rather not for fear of losing my timing "this late in my career," deserves more if one were to review her efforts in bringing the nation's premiere sportsfest to her turf. Enormous.

If Troy had a Helen, Tubod has an Imelda ready to snuff "a thousand bombs" out of an athlete's way. And, yes, fancy this: Terrorists are like flies. They are co-terminus with the existence of humanity.

So, fear not my dear athletes. Let's rumble and tumble in Tubod. Get set, ready, go!

Tour caravan off to Legaspi

By June Navarro

LINA

PICTURE this: 100 vehicles of different shapes and sizes snaking through the thoroughfares of Southern Luzon all the way to the Bicol region, all looking forward to witness the rebirth of the greatest cycling marathon in the country.

On board the 100-vehicle caravan from Manila to Legaspi City is the 500-strong entourage of the Tour Pilipinas 2003, a 15-stage, 18-day race well-augured as the revival of the summer spectacle on wheels.

Tour officials, cyclists, team officials, race personnel, sponsors, entertainers and members of the media from print and broadcast leave early this morning to form part of the race set to kick off with a 183-kilometer out-and-back course in Legaspi City on Saturday (April 26).

"This is it. The long wait is finally over. All the time and effort spent to prepare for this entire undertaking will now come to fore," said cycling godfather and Tour Pilipinas chair Bert Lina, who, along with Tour Pilipinas organizer Lito Alvarez and executive director Mar Mendoza spearheaded the year-long preparation of the Tour.

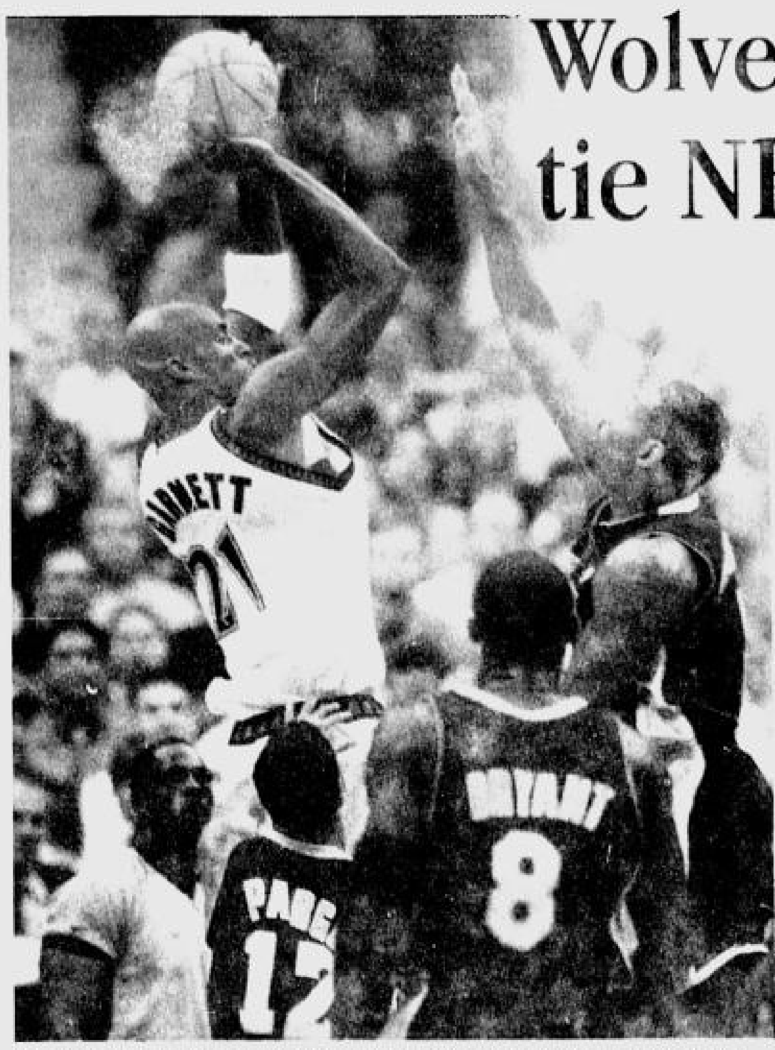
Prior to the departure, all kinks were already ironed out to ensure a smooth conduct of the Tour which got its sanction from the Philippine Amateur Cycling Association on Monday courtesy of its chair Loi Cruz.

This early, cycling teams are already in the peak of heating up the competition with Bowling Gold close to pampering its members and Pagcor Sports getting its full backing from Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino and team manager Luis Carlos.

NBN-4 will present a 30-minute highlight of the race on a daily basis while Sports Radio dzSR 918 khz) takes care of the blow-by-blow account of the Tour which is also backed by Accel, Lipovitan, BPI-MS, Longines, FedEx, and Mail & More. Other sponsors are Selletalia, Vittoria, Philtranco and Look.

Aside from Bowling Gold and Pagcor Sports, 10 other teams will vie for fame and glory with the P1-million top team prize and P200,000 individual champion's purse in mind.

Private teams such as PLDT-NDD, Tanduay, Gilbey's Island Punch, Samsung and Intel, all boosted with a bevy of experienced and promising riders on their line-ups, clash with equally talented teams from the government.


GARNETT (21) shoots over Los Angeles Lakers Jannero Pargo (12), Kobe Bryant (8) and Robert Horry (5) in the second half. Minnesota won easily, 119-91

REUTERS

Wolves, Bucks prevail, tie NBA playoff rivals

MINNEAPOLIS—The Minnesota Timberwolves gave the three-time defending champion Los Angeles Lakers a wake-up call, romping to a 119-91 victory to tie their NBA Western Conference first-round series 1-1 Tuesday.

The Timberwolves limited Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal to 54 points between them, each picking up 27. The Lakers pair had combined for 71 points in the 117-98 victory in the series opener Sunday.

Troy Hudson paced the Wolves with 37 points and 10 assists.

Kevin Garnett added 35 points while pulling down a whopping 20 rebounds.

O'Neal arrived just an hour and a half before the game after attending his grandfather's funeral in South Carolina.

Game Three is in Los Angeles Thursday (Friday in Manila).

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Gary Payton poured in 22 points to carry the Milwaukee Bucks to an 88-85 playoff win over the Nets.

The Eastern Conference first-round series is now tied 1-1, with Game Three in Milwaukee Thursday (Friday in Manila).

Payton, who notched just eight points in Milwaukee's lopsided 109-96 loss Saturday, had 12 by halftime Tuesday.

"We have to put the pressure on them," Payton told reporters. "Tonight was a great game, nobody wants to see a blowout like Game One.

"Tonight we came ready to play and you saw what happened." *Reuters*

TRACY McGrady and the Orlando Magic battle the Detroit Pistons anew today (April 24) in Game Two of their first-round NBA Playoffs series live at 8 a.m. on Solar Sports, with a replay at 10 p.m. In the second of today's double-header at 7 p.m. on IBC-13, the Dallas Mavericks try to make it 2-0 against the Portland Trailblazers.

Tennis top pick out

NIKKI Manalo pulled the rug from under top pick Bambi Zoleta, 6-4, 6-1, yesterday to barge into the girls' 14-under semifinals of the Luis Hilado Memorial Cup at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The fifth-seeded Manalo next faces third seek Jessica Agra, who pummeled sixth seed Anna Buenviaje, 6-0, 6-1.

Second seed Julie Em Botor clipped Isobelle Culaba, 6-2, 6-0, to advance against fourth seed Trudy Amoranto, who thumped No. 8 Sarah Jane Lim, 6-4, 6-2.

In the boys' 12-under division, No. 1 Patrick Arevalo clobbered No. 8 Kim Ivor Saraza, 6-0, 6-3, No. 2 Akio Sy defeated Paul Nicole Magaway, 6-2, 6-0 and No. 4 Tomic Apacible whipped No. 5 Raymarc Santiago, 6-2, 6-0, to reach the semifinals.

Winners in the girls category were No. 1 Sarah Jane Lim, No. 2 Jia Elesis, No. 4 Martina Guba and Zhane Quitara.

Booking semifinal slots in the unisex 10-under class were No. 1 Pocholo Macalino, No. 2 Noel Agra, No. 3 Alberto Villamor and No. 5 Leander Lazaro.

In the boys' 16-under division, No. 1 Nestor Celestino Jr. outclassed Mario Espedido, 6-0, 6-1, to advance in the quarterfinals against No. 5 Christian Canlas, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Jomar Sucaldito.

Also advancing were No. 4 Miguel Narvaez, who beat Bryan Dayleg, 6-1, 6-1, and No. 7 Raymond Villarete, who prevailed over Rommel Opiniano, 6-1, 6-1.

Quarterfinalists in the boys' 14-under category were No. 1 Daniel Macalino, No. 2 Russell Arcilla Jr., No. 3 Pablo Olivarez, No. 5 Juan Felipe Mayor, El Santos and Renato Suarez.

Summer meet

TOBY'S Sports is sponsoring a summer tennis festival for the second straight year at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. The week-long affair features the Philta national age-group tournament slated April 28 to May 4.

Registration is ongoing at the Philta office (tel. no. 525-6434) and all Toby's outlets. Deadline of entry is on Friday (April 25) at 5 p.m. while drawing of lots will be on April 26.

All eyes on Jody, Gaby

DEFENDING champion Jody Coseteng and promising Gaby dela Merced will be on the spotlight when the simultaneous staging of the fifth and sixth rounds of the 2003 SVI-Petron Grand Prix and the first two rounds of the Philippine National Touring Car Championships get going this weekend at the Subic International Raceway.

Coseteng, of Red Horse-Caltex, and Dela Merced, of Petron-Auto Solutions, try to hold on to the lead in their respective categories in this annual series organized by the Sports Values Inc. in cooperation with Petron and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Coseteng, who dominated two of the first four races held so far, seeks an all-important victory over his closest rivals Kookie Ramirez of Petron-SRA and Mike Anton of Red Bull-Auto Options in the Blaze-sponsored super saloon category.

SPORTSTV Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs - Magic vs Pistons, Game 2, 8 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.), Solar Sports, Mavericks vs Blazers, Game 2, 7 p.m., IBC 13

World Pro Basketball Challenge, 10:30 a.m. (r), ESPN

NBA Anthology - Furious Finishes of the 90s, 7:30 p.m., ESPN

SPORTSWATCH

Wide-open race predicted in Ucap meet

A WIDE-open race is predicted when the "9th Ucap 7-Cock Derby " gets going today at the Mandaluyong Coliseum. Protagonists are expected to field their multi-winners in the event sponsored by Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free Shampoo, Sagupaan B-50 Forten (anti-stress) and Lakpue Drug's Washout Shampoo. Leading the field are three pointers Tony Litonjua (Starwars) and the team of lawyer Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza and Vice Mayor Nestor Mercado (Golden 7-Cock April 29 and May 1 Mandaluyong). The big field of two pointers are headed by hotelier-sportsman Binoy Enriquez (Firebird), Patrick ``Idol'' Antonio (Sagupaan Hammer), Ucap president Raymond Velayo and Oca Bolante (Arnis Master II), newspaper publisher Butch Macasaet and Mario Villamor (Phoenix Greenwood), Romero Yu (MTJ Ray Balikatan May 6), Maj. Bobby Doromal (Pandor Magid), Vice Gov. Mario Espinosa (Sir Arthur), engineer Sonny Lagon and Mayor Joel Brillantes (JT JBB Blue Blade), Gerry Ramos (KGR) and Mayor Ashley Arayata (Agilahas) and John Capinpin/Alan Tan/Madlambayan Brothers (J-Cap Mad RBA II). For more details, call 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Pampanga Streetball Challenge set April 26-27

PAMPANGA'S top streetball teams strut their wares in the Seniors, Women's Juniors and Midgets divisions of the adidas Streetball Challenge 2003 Luzon Finals slated April 26-27 at the Robinson's Starmills, San Fernando, Pampanga. The cagefest is co-presented by Globe Gentext in-cooperation with WG&A, adidas fragrance and body care for men, Powerade, Viva mineral water, Chalk magazine, Studio 23, Magic 89.9 dwTM and 99.5 RT. The victorious adidas Streetball Challenge 2003 national champions will represent the Philippines to the adidas Asian Streetball Finals 2003 to be held in August in Seoul, Korea.

AGASSI

Agassi advances; Paradorn ousted

HOUSTON, Texas—Top seed Andre Agassi took only 47 minutes to dispose of Croatia's Zeljko Krajan 6-2 6-0 in the first round of the $380,000 US Clay Court Championship on Tuesday. The 32-year-old American's victory took his record this year to an ATP-best 19-1 and he was delighted with his performance. Agassi now meets Russian Iraki Labadze in the second round on Wednesday. Meanwhile, in Barcelona, Spain, Paradorn Srichaphan was knocked out of the Open Seat Godo in just 52 minutes Tuesday by David Sanchez of Spain the day after he became the first Asian to break into the world's top 10. Paradorn, the fifth-seeded Thai who had a first-round bye, lost 6-0, 6-2. Sanchez will face defending champion Gaston Gaudio. *AP*

Petron beach volleyball tourney May 3-4

THE 2003 Petron Beach Volleyball Championship unfolds at the Island Cove Resort and Leisure Park, Kawit, Cavite on May 3 and 4, with 10 of the country's top teams seeing action. Organized by Volts Sports Management, the two-day volleyball meet aims to provide young ladies a fun, competitive chance to represent themselves and their sponsors. "We want to pursue the Olympic ideal of 'sports for all,'" said Volts executive director and former Philippine Sports Commissioner Tisha Abundo. The tournament is open to former or current members of a university, college or high school varsity teams. The 10 teams, which will be selected by a Volts screening committee, will be divided into two groups through the drawing of lots.

RACING TIPS AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. All Class 2. Chairman of D'Board 3. Truly Ajay

Race 2--1. Nureyev Heiress 2. Centra 3. Hurricane Doding

Race 3--1. Ebony Starr 2. Hurry King 3. Tanging Ikaw 4. Strong Contender

Race 4--1. Precious Stone 2. Danielle's Angel 3. Pep Up

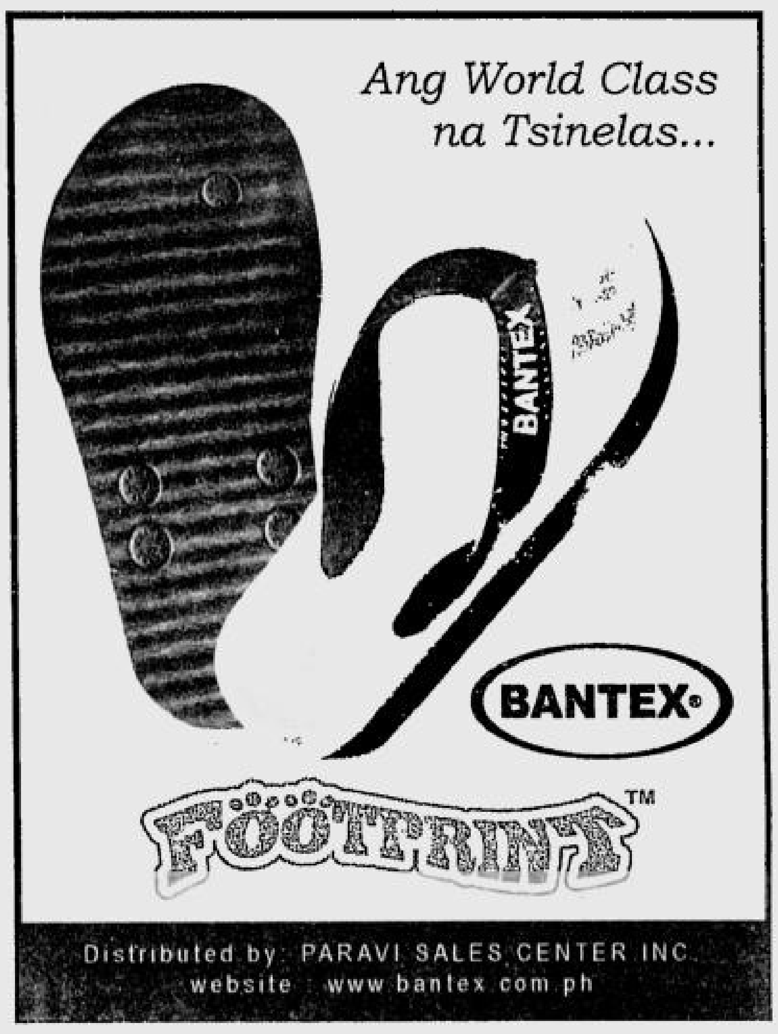
Race 5--1. Noble House 2. Hasty 3. Very Sharp

Race 6--1. Red Star Rising 2. Siete de Marso 3. Cash McCall

Race 7--1. Alessandra 2. Explorer 3. Mr. Speaker 4. Pride of Cebu

Race 8--1. Star Worth 2. Simply Great 3. Hummingbird

Race 9--1. Security Sense 2. Extreme Illusion 3. Friendly Venture 4. Jazz In Time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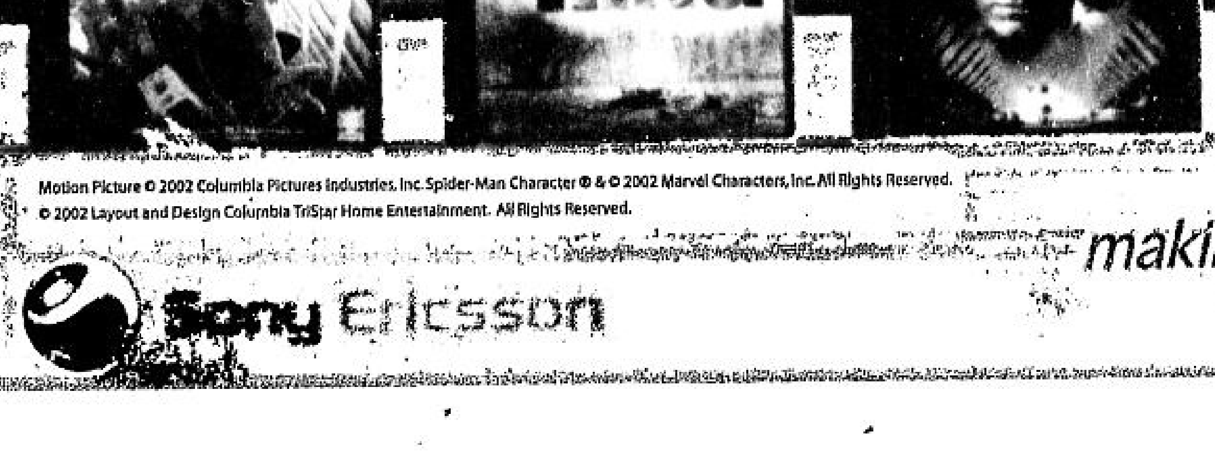
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METRO
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Metro street crimes down–GMA

By Dona Pazzibugan

AN ECSTATIC President Macapagal-Arroyo claimed yesterday that her crusade against street crimes has started to bear fruit.

She said street crimes in Metro Manila have gone down since Feb. 21, when she gave officials of the Philippine National Police a dressing down for failing to protect the public against criminals.

"I'm happy that as result of my directive to the PNP in a command conference last Feb. 21, the station commanders are training the barangay *tanods* to fight criminality," she told barangay tanods of Metro Manila gathered at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay yesterday.

"Barely three weeks after that conference, street crimes went down to 152 cases compared to the 264 cases during the three weeks immediately preceding the Feb. 21 meeting," she declared.

The barangay *tanods* have undergone training from the PNP to fight crimes.

Ms Macapagal said aside from looking out for suspicious-looking strangers in their areas, the barangay *tanods* should also go after drug traffickers and perpetrators of illegal gambling.

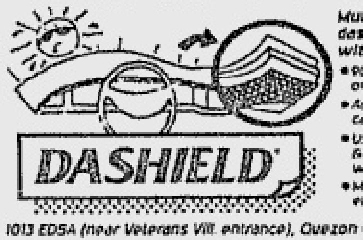
"You may also monitor graft and corrupt pratices among government officials," she added.

At an unprecedented command conference in Malacañang last February, the President scored PNP officials for not doing their job to protect the public from criminals.

She told PNP officials from Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog that police response to street crimes "has not been satisfactory."

Street crimes include snatching of cell phones and jewelry, picking pockets, fighting among gangs, mugging, and selling of illegal drugs.

Days after the command conference, the President made surprise visits in police precincts in Tondo, Manila and in Pasay, where she caught commanders being lax on their job.



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Aglipay to head fight vs drugs

By Christian V. Esguerra

DEPUTY Director Gen. Edgar Aglipay, who had been sacked as Metro Manila police chief for failing to curb illegal gambling under his jurisdiction, has been tapped to head a new anti-drug task force.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced the appointment yesterday in the presence of Interior Secretary Jose Lina, the man who ordered Aglipay's relief during a massive police revamp last year.

Aglipay will head the task force while serving as police deputy chief for operations, the President said at the graduation rites for Metro Manila barangay men in Pasay City.

As the new anti-drug czar, Aglipay will closely coordinate with the Dangerous Drugs Board and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, according to the President.

Sought for clarification later, Southern Police District chief Jose Gutierrez, who was present when Ms Macapagal announced the appointment, said the task force would be a "much stronger police component" in the government's campaign against illegal drugs.

At present, Gutierrez said the PDEA taps local and national police in its operations. Aglipay's task force would be in charge of these police units and coordinate their operations with the Palace-formed agency, he added.

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Palace taps barangay men to contain SARS

By Christian Esguerra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday tapped more than 30,000 barangay officers to help control the spread of the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) disease in Metro Manila.

Watchmen or "tanod" should assist health authorities in educating residents on the need to undergo precautionary measures such as voluntary quarantine, according to Ms Macapagal.

"The welfare of our nation rests upon the sense of duty of each and every citizen," she addressed a crowd of around 26,000 in Pasay City at the end of their crash course on police work and anti-terrorism measures.

"Let's appeal to those who feel they're at risk of having SARS to voluntarily quarantine themselves and seek assistance from health authorities."

Local leaders, she said, should explain that the quarantine of even an entire barangay would not necessarily mean that its residents are SARS carriers.

"We must take a sensible view of the situation," she said.

The Manila City government has already set up an isolation ward at the Ospital ng Maynila to treat possible SARS cases.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said that medical surveillance teams from the 44 health centers in the city and the four government hospitals, including the Ospital ng Maynila, have been deployed in all the communities.

In Makati, local officials said foreigners and overseas Filipino workers—especially those who have come from countries where SARS is widespread—would be closely watched for symptoms of the disease.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay has ordered hotel and lodging operators in the city to provide the city's heath department with a list of guests from Asian countries where cases of SARS have broken out.

"While immigration and airport authorities have imposed strict screening measure on travelers from these countries, the city government is not about to take any chances," Binay said in a statement.

Earlier, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit warned that the deadly disease could be brought home by overseas workers.

al Fever Sensing Device

AIRPORT General Manager Edgar Manda shows off the facility's new anti-SARS instrument—a Thermal Fever Sensing Device—in Malacañang. Manda said that the devices would help contain the spread of the deadly disease in the country.

EDWIN BACASMAS

SARS-fearing cops haul spitting nurse to jail

By Leila Salaverria

THREE members of the Makati police should pray that a nurse they apprehended during a traffic accident is free of the deadly SARS virus.

The nurse, identified as Reynaldo Javier of Estrada Street, Barangay Poblacion, Makati, allegedly spit on the three police officers, hitting one of them in the face, said PO2 Joel Delos Santos of the Makati Police.

The police officers, assigned to Police Community Precinct 9, were identified as PO1 Thomas Tacut, PO1 Romeo Penaflor and Insp. Rosauro Balictar, the station's assistant commander.

Police said Javier had identified himself as a nurse assigned to Fort Bonifacio.

According to Delos Santos, the three officers apprehended Javier after he hit a security guard and a pedestrian while driving a motorcycle in Rockwell Tuesday night.

But when he was taken to precinct 9, Javier allegedly got angry at the police officers and began cursing them. Javier, who was said to be drunk, then spit on the authorities, hitting Tacut in the face and Penaflor and Balictar in various parts of their bodies.

Stunned, the lawmen hauled Javier off to the Makati Police headquarters and filed an oral defamation complaint against the suspect.

Delos Santos said Javier had been taken to the Medical City Hospital for treatment of minor injuries he sustained in the motorcycle accident.

Delos Santos said it is up to the precinct 9 police officers if they want to be tested for any virus that they could have gotten from Javier's saliva.

Police: Row over inheritance led to Koreans' abduction, killing

By Philip Tubeza and Leila Salaverria

THE KOREAN woman who was allegedly kidnapped on April 12 in Makati City is the daughter of a church caretaker killed in Parañaque last February, police said yesterday.

Investigators are also looking into the possibility that the mastermind of the murder of the Korean woman and the kidnapping of her daughter may be a Korean woman related to the victims.

"The (abducted) Korean woman allegedly went here to follow up the case of her murdered mother," a ranking Western Police District officer said yesterday. "So the killers and the kidnappers could be one and the same."

The Korean woman, Angelina Kim-Rabello, 38, was said to have been kidnapped after she received a sizeable inheritance, according to a Makati police officer.

Her mother, church caretaker Byung Rae Kim-Rabello, was found dead at around 11 p.m. on Feb. 17 at the entrance of the Korean Union Church at the Multinational Village in Parañaque.

The police believe the elder Kim-Rabello was mauled to death in her room.

Investigators suspected security guard Vellaros Gambong as the culprit.

Gambong, 25, allegedly took Kim-Rabello's P20,000 salary and disappeared shortly after the killing.

"This is really an interesting case," said another Manila investigator.

Kim-Rabello, a resident of Valenzuela, is allegedly still in the hands of her four captors who abducted her and her two companions while they were in the A&W restaurant on Makati Avenue at around 7:30 p.m. on April 12.

Rabello's cousin, Juvielyn Sison, 24, and the latter's two-year-old son were released unharmed in Manila on April 20.

According to a Makati police source, the suspects had not called up Rabello's family and asked for money, which means the authorities cannot treat the incident as a kidnap-for-ransom case.

The source said that the Makati police are considering the Korean's case as a missing person incident. Also, police have yet to establish the motive for the alleged abduction.

According to a Manila police source, Sison believed a Korean relative was behind the kidnapping. The Koreans allegedly are fighting among themselves over the inheritance.

The alleged mastermind reportedly lives in Matadero, Valenzuela, the source said.

But Sison was very reluctant to give information to the police.

"She is afraid of the kidnappers," the police officer said. "They threatened to kill her. She was very reluctant to give a statement and did not even want to file a complaint. So I told her that the police might suspect her if she did not file a complaint."

As of Wednesday morning, Sison has yet to return to the police.

Atienza wants trade blueprint drawn up in urban summit

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday said he is hoping to establish new trade and tourism ties with other local executives who are trooping to the capital for a summit this weekend.

The Urban Cities Summit, Atienza said, would allow the 47 participating mayors to share their experiences and forge a common development blueprint for business and tourism in their respective cities.

"The summit will enable us mayors to explore new links in our cities' business and tourism sectors," Atienza said. "This could result to the forging of exchange programs and new markets and business opportunities for everyone."

Atienza said that he hopes he and the other mayors can draw up "a coherent and workable blueprint" that can be used as a model for the cities' development efforts.

As summit host, Atienza also hopes to drive home his position that the key to the country's economic progress is to encourage development at the local level.

This, he said, would only be possible if there is genuine local autonomy, which is another of the mayor's favorite causes.

"The geographic nature of the Philippines as an archipelago dictates that development would have to be implemented at the local level, and that local government units must take the lead in the effort," he explained.

"Our experiences in the past decades showed that introducing development from the national level and in a centralized form isn't suitable for our country," Atienza said. "This model failed, and it would be fruitless and counterproductive to continue pursuing it."

The mayor said newly developed countries, such as China, achieved economic success that was anchored on local development.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 24, 2003
Octave of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 3:11-26
Gospel:	Lk 24:35-48

The two disciples told what had happened on the road and how Jesus made himself known when he broke bread with them.

As they went on talking about this, Jesus himself stood in their midst. (And he said to them, "Peace to you.") In their panic and fright they thought they were seeing a ghost, but he said to them, "Why are you upset and why do such ideas cross your mind? Look at my hands and feet and see that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves that a ghost has no flesh and bones as I have." (As he said this, he showed his hands and feet.)

In their joy they didn't dare believe and were still astonished. So he said to them, "Have you anything to eat?" and they gave him a piece of broiled fish. He took it and ate it before them.

Then Jesus said to them, "Remember the words I spoke to you when I was still with you: Everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

And he went on, "You see what was written: the Messiah had to suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. Then repentance and forgiveness in his name would be proclaimed to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Now you shall be witnesses to this."

Commentary

The Jesus who appeared to the disciples was the same Jesus with whom they shared meals by the roadside, on the lakeshore, in caves, in friends' homes. With flesh and bones, still bearing the marks of the nails in his hands and feet, he ate a piece of what seemed to be a favorite (or the only food available) among friends, fish! But now what was hidden in his humanity was made manifest: Jesus fulfills Scriptures as the suffering and risen Messiah. In him forgiveness of sins is available to all. He has the power to send the promised Spirit. He is truly man but also truly God! The saving presence of the God-Man continues to be visible in the world, through the "witnesses of these things" . . . the disciples . . . you.

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Ping Lacson's 'hard sell'

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THIS early, presidential aspirant Panfilo "Ping" Lacson is already campaigning. And he's employing what in sales is called "hard sell."

A hard sell is employed by salesmen who force prospective clients or customers to buy their products even if the prospects have no need for the products at the moment. Selling a memorial plot is an example of a hard sell.

Lacson is not rating in the surveys. Hard sell is his desperate attempt to endear himself to the voters.

* * *

One TV commercial shows Robina Gokongwei, daughter of multi-billionaire John Gokongwei, telling viewers that she was rescued by Lacson from her kidnappers.

For the record, it was not Lacson alone who rescued the Gokongwei scion from her kidnappers.

Robina failed to mention Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, then a captain, who was Lacson's chief at the time. Then lst Lt. Panfilo Lacson was Berroya's deputy at the police intelligence branch of the Metrocom Security and Investigation Group (MISG).

* * *

Robina also failed to mention Lt. Col. Rolly Abadilla, MISG chief, who worked painstakingly to find and rescue her.

Robina's rescue was a team effort at the MISG. Abadilla used the best brains and the best members of the MISG to crack the Robina kidnapping case.

Ping Lacson should be ashamed of himself for claiming sole credit for Robina's rescue. He was only part of the big picture in the rescue.

I should know. I was covering the MISG for the Times Journal when Robina was kidnapped and rescued by Colonel Rolando Abadilla and his men. The "men" included Lacson.

* * *

Let's grant that Lacson played a big part in the rescue of Robina Gokongwei.

But for every Robina Gokongwei, there are several Bubby Dacer skeletons in Ping Lacson's closets.

Bubby Dacer was a public relations practitioner who was kidnapped and mercilessly killed, along with his driver, by Lacson's men at the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

* * *

Prisons Director Ricardo Macala has again been caught with his hands in the cookie jar.

A very important inmate at the National Bilibid Prisons, former Zamboanga del Sur Congressman Romeo Jalosjos, shot and wounded a fellow inmate, Marcos de Guzman, at the maximum security compound. De Guzman was shot in the leg.

But Macala denies Jalosjos shot De Guzman.

* * *

Macala gave a stupid reason: the bullet that hit De Guzman was stray.

If Macala's word is to be believed, nobody shot De Guzman intentionally. The bullet that hit De Guzman was fired from the gun of a person who didn't want to hurt anybody.

When veteran broadcaster Korina Sanchez asked Macala in a radio interview where the bullet that hit De Guzman came from, you know Macala's answer?

* * *

"*Galing sa baril ang bala* (The bullet came from a gun)," he said.

Por Dios, por santo! Would you expect that kind of answer from an intelligent person?

As Ms Sanchez told me later: "Either he's stupid or he's not interested in finding out who shot De Guzman."

* * *

I called up my sources at the National Bilibid Prisons and asked one of them the real story.

Here's what I gathered from an NBP insider:

Jalosjos is a *bosyo* (leader) of a gang of inmates at the maximum security. As a bosyo , he reigns supreme in his gang. His word is law.

But De Guzman tried to question his leadership by asking if he had the guts to kill people in as much as he was serving time for raping a young girl and not for murder.

This angered Jalosjos. He borrowed a gun from another inmate and shot De Guzman.

* * *

The question now is how did the gun get into the maximum security?

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CRIMINAL PROCEDURE)—Pre-trial order - Section 2 of Rule 118 of the Rules of Court states: "Sec. 2. Pre-trial agreement.—All agreements or admissions made or entered [into] during the pre-trial conference shall be reduced in writing and signed by the accused and counsel, otherwise, they cannot be used against the accused. The agreements covering the matters referred to in section 1 of this Rule shall be approved by the court." Based on the foregoing provision, for a pretrial agreement to be binding on the accused, it must satisfy the following conditions: (1) the agreement or admission must be in writing, and (2) it must be signed by both the accused and their counsel. The court's approval, mentioned in the last sentence of the above-quoted Section, is not needed to make the stipulations binding on the parties. Such approval is necessary merely to emphasize the supervision by the court over the case and to enable it to control the flow of the proceedings. Once the stipulations are reduced into writing and signed by the parties and their counsels, they become binding on the parties who made them. They become judicial admissions of the fact or facts stipulated. Even if placed at a disadvantageous position, a party may not be allowed to rescind them unilaterally; it must assume the consequences of the disadvantage. If the accused are allowed to plead guilty under appropriate circumstances, by parity of reasoning, they should likewise be allowed to enter into a fair and true pretrial agreement under appropriate circumstances. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Panganiban, Third Division, Bayas v. Sandiganbayan (First Division), G.R. Nos. 143689-91. Nov. 12, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

Don Bosco alumni to hold 24th national convention

THE DON Bosco Alumni Philippine National Federation has announced the holding of its 24th Annual Alumni National Convention on May 2, 3 and 4 at the Unilab auditorium on Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong City.

Dubbed "Bosconian Excellence: Re-engineering the local chapters," the convention will be hosted by the Don Bosco Alumni (Mandaluyong Chapter) as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of Don Bosco Technical College.

The convention aims to: Engineer a common structure for all chapters to attain office and communication facilities necessary for the chapters to lin and work as one; educate al chapter and batch officers t help assimilate their local con cerns into the federal direc tion; and to effect program nationwide that will enhanc the Bosconian spirit and digni ty through a strong alumn leadership.

Convention registration fee i at P800 per person.

For details, log on to www.nat con24.donbosco.net or call th National Convention Secretaria (Sonny Jalijali, national conven tion ch[illegible] at 744-1338, 531 62[illegible] or e-mail dbap n[illegible]donbosco.net.

Vicencio: I won't step down

VICENCIO

ERIK ARAZAS

By Philip C. Tubeza

MALABON Mayor Amado Vicencio, who is facing another suspension from office, yesterday said that he would not step down and would fight the suspension order which he described as unjust.

Vicencio said that the Department of Interior and Local Government hearing officer who recommended the 60-day suspension has admitted that he made a mistake.

The mayor identified the DILG hearing officer as Arnel Mangando. He said Mangando had admitted to him that he forgot he gave the mayor 15 days to respond to a charge for grave abuse of authority.

The charge was filed by opposition councilors in connection with the purchase of a P88 million piece of property in Tanza, Navotas, during a hearing on March 25.

The property was intended as a relocation site for some 2,800 squatters who will be displaced by the Philippine National Railways Corporation's rehabilitation program.

The mayor said Mangando had recommended his suspension on April 4 after he "failed to present his side."

He said he submitted his response on April 8, which was within the set period, but Mangando had forgotten he gave the mayor 15 days to respond.

The recommendation somehow reached Malacañang and the Palace acted on the "erroneous order," Vicencio said.

Vicencio is asking the administration to review the suspension order after Mangando admitted his mistake. He also vowed that he would fight the order, adding his lawyers are thinking about filing charges against the persons who issued the suspension order.

Also yesterday, Malabon and the North Railway Development Project inter-agency committee inked a memorandum of agreement under which the Housing and Urban Development and Coordinating Council would assume control of the Tanza property.

PANAHALAANG PANGSOD NG MALABON
IPAGLATAY NILA ANG MAYOR NG MALABON

SUPPORTERS of Mayor Vicencio barricade city hall. ERIK ARAZAS

The MOA also stipulated that the P12.5 million Malabon had given to Jun Jun Fishing Corp. as a downpayment would be returned to the city.

Vicencio said the MOU should put to rest all the accusations of gross negligence, dishonesty, and misconduct in office against him concerning the Tanza property.

Vicencio was also suspended last year for the controversial construction of a P122 million new city hall in Catmon, Malabon.

Court asked to junk suit vs oil firms

By Jerome Aning

CALTEX Philippines Inc. has asked a Manila Regional Trial Court to dismiss a lawsuit accusing the company, along with Shell Philippines and Petron Corp., of monopolizing the petroleum industry by unfair and concerted price hikes.

In a 14-page motion, Caltex lawyers Carlos Platon and Erwin Herrera said the complainant, Social Justice Society, should direct their accusations not to the court but to the Department of Energy-Department of Justice Joint Task Force.

The SJS is a small political party composed mostly of lawyers. The group sued the country's top three oil firms last March for increasing the prices of their petroleum products despite having purchased their inventory at a much lower cost, and whenever their competitors increase their prices.

Caltex said Republic Act No. 8479 or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998 tasks the DOE-DOJ Joint Task Force to investigate and determine if there is a "threatened, imminent or actual violation" of anti-cartel regulations.

The Caltex lawyers said that only if the results of the probe is positive could the task force direct government prosecutors to go to court and sue the violator.

They said that the same law tasks the DOE "to maintain a periodic schedule of present and future total industry inventory of petroleum products for the purpose of determining the level of supply."

Sometimes, it doesn't pay to laugh

By Leila B. Salaverria

FOR LAUGHING out loud, Arnel Pablo landed at the intensive care unit of a hospital after he was allegedly stabbed by businessman Alfred Yambot inside a Makati bar at dawn yesterday.

Police said Pablo, who was a regular at the Boogart Videoke Bar on Evangelista Street in Makati, was friendly with the bar attendants. He was laughing at a funny remark that one of the attendants had made when Yambot and his two companions entered the bar at about 1 a.m. yesterday, said SPO4 Leonardo Timtiman.

Yambot thought Pablo and the bar attendants were laughing at him and approached the group. Soon enough, Yambot and Pablo got into a fight.

Police said Yambot and one of his companions mauled Pablo.

Yambot also got hold of a knife and stabbed Pablo in the thigh, police said.

The suspect was about to stab Pablo again, but the bar attendants dragged the victim into a dressing room and out of Yambot's reach.

Police who came to the scene arrested Yambot, but his companions managed to escape. He is now detained at the Makati Police Headquarters, while Pablo is at the intensive care unit of the San Juan de Dios hospital.

Makati's one-way road scheme eased

By Leila B. Salaverria

MOTORISTS in Makati will now get a break from the sometimes confusing one-way street system being implemented in the city.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday said that he has approved a new traffic flow scheme which will allow two-way traffic flow on normally one-way streets.

The decision came after his meeting with members of the American Chambers of Commerce.

The new scheme takes effect this coming weekend.

Binay said some members of the AmCham noted that even with the light traffic in the central business district during weekends and holidays, they still have to take a circuitous route because of the numerous one way streets.

Under the new scheme, two-way traffic will be allowed on the following streets in Legazpi Village: all service roads of Dela Rosa Car Park 1-3; Sotto; Bolanos; Esteban; Ormaza; Rodriguez; Rada; Castro; Palanca; Gil; Nieva; Perea; Gallardo; Soria; Aguirre; Jimenez; Trasierra; and Salcedo (Gamboa to Benavidez).

In Salcedo Village, the scheme will take effect in the following streets: all service roads of Valero Car Park 1-3; Gallardo; Lakandula; Bautista; Sanchez; Soliman; and Villar.

However, some streets will still be exempted from the scheme.

In Legazpi Village, one-way traffic will be maintained on the following streets: Amorsolo; Amorsolo Canal; Adelantado; Dela Rosa; Salcedo (Dela Rosa to V.A. Rufino); Legazpi; Gamboa; V.A. Rufino; and Benavidez.

In Salcedo Village, the exempted streets are: L.P. Leviste; V.A. Rufino; Valero (V.A. Rufino to Villar); and San Agustin.

Signs advising motorists about the new scheme will be put up at strategic locations.

No-bail bid vs Baladjay filed

By Alcuin Papa

THE QUEZON City Prosecutor's Office yesterday recommended no bail for Rosario Baladjay, the so-called "pyramid scam queen".

The no-bail bid was for three estafa cases filed against Baladjay, president of Multitel.

The charges stemmed from a complaint filed against Baladjay by spouses Oliver and Maria Christina Amorin of Lovel Estate Developers Inc.

The couple claimed Baladjay convinced them to invest P1.5 million into Multitel.

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APR.24 THURSDAY

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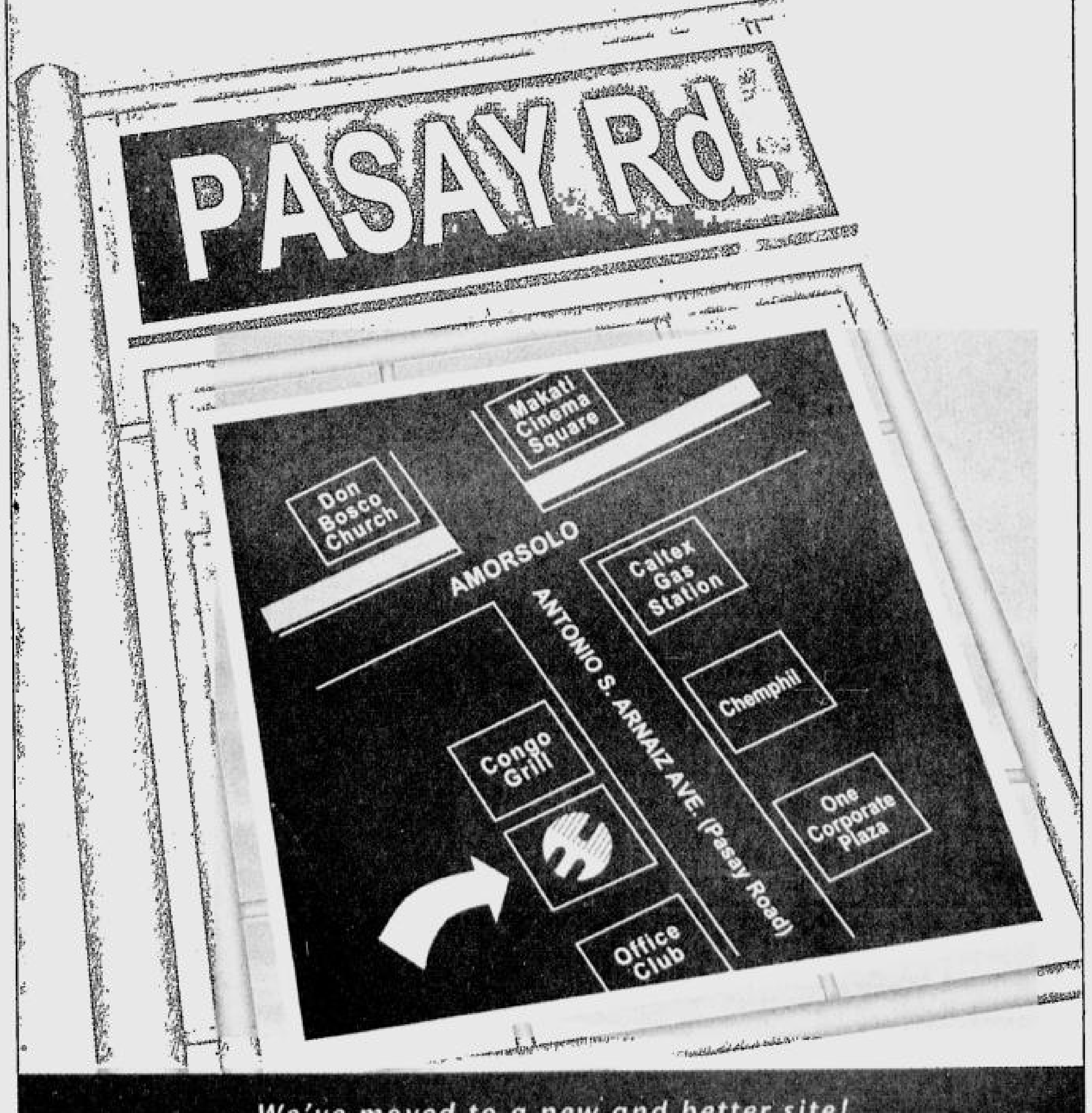

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METROBRIEFS

Killed by tricycle driver

POLICE arrested tricycle driver Rufino Alaye, 37, who ran over with his vehicle and killed Bernadette Ortegam, 9, while she was crossing a street in Taytay, Rizal, last Sunday. Ortegam died while undergoing treatment at the Angono General Hospital. Police said she hit her head on the concrete gutter of the street when Alaye hit her with the tricycle he was driving. Alaye told police the girl had suddenly crossed the street and he could not avoid hitting. He is facing charges of reckless imprudence resulting to homicide before the Rizal Provincial prosecutor's office.

Nelson Forte Flores

Death due to old grudge

LUISITO Nanalang was stabbed to death by Philip Sitosta in Manila on Tuesday night, police said. SPO2 Diomedes Labarda of the Western Police District said Nanalang chanced upon the victim who was walking along Sta. Maria Street at 11:30 p.m. on Tuesday and stabbed him several times in the body. Sitosta, 25, was rushed to the Ospital ng Maynila but was declared dead on arrival. Police said the suspect, who is still at large, was harboring an old grudge against the victim's mother who had filed a complaint of slight physical injuries against the suspect, police said.

Anne Luisa E. Villarico

Fished out of Manila Bay

THE BODY of Ronald Pablo, 26, who tried to swim the distance between the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the US Embassy on Roxas Boulevard in Manila was fished out of Manila Bay last Monday, police said. Relatives of the victim told police that Pablo was a former patient of the National Institute for Mental Health, said SPO3 Steve Casimiro of Western Police District. Pablo was jogging along the CCP complex before he decided to take a swim in the bay.

Anne Luisa E. Villarico

Fetus found in Tondo

A FETUS wrapped in plastic was found on Yuseco Street in Tondo, Manila yesterday, police said. Kagawad Jun Roque of Barangay 227 found the fetus, which was about four months old, said Detective Rommel Del Rosario of the Western Police District. The fetus was turned over to the Popular Funeral Homes for safekeeping.

Anne Luisa E. Villarico

Jobs fair at the Senate

MORE than 10,000 jobs culled from the data banks of private companies including the Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of National Defense, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, the National Bureau of Investigation and other government agencies are available in the Jobs Fair sa Senado, to be held today and tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the second floor of the Philippine Senate on Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City. The Office of Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. will lead the employment-matching program that is expected to attract the unemployed, new graduates, undergraduates, out-of-school youth, part-time workers, and blue and white collar workers. A one-stop kiosk will be set up for work requirements such as NBI clearance, Civil Service eligibility and other necessary documents.

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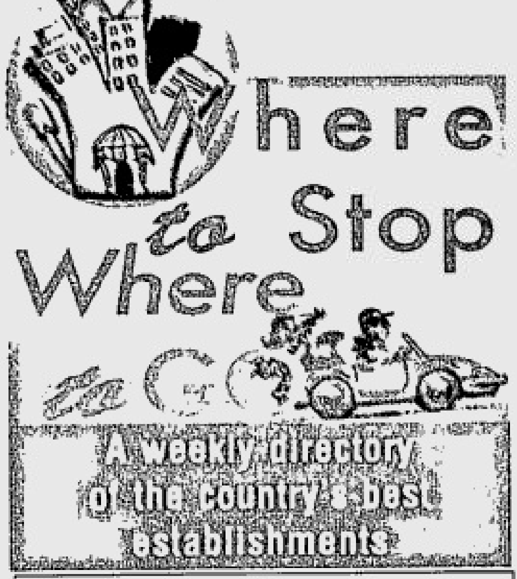

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Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 813-8888 / Fax. 813-5499

The Peninsula Manila Hotel
Cor. Ayala Ave. & Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 810-3456 / Fax. 815-4825

Mandarin Oriental Manila Hotel
Cor. Paseo de Roxas & Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 750-8888 / Fax. 817-2472

The Bellevue Manila
North Bridgeway, Northgate Cyberzone,
Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tel. (632) 771-8181/Fax(632) 771-8282

Barcelo Hotels and Resorts
4/F Adamson Centre, 121 LP Leviste St. Salcedo Village, Makati
Tel. (02) 867-1159 / Fax. (02) 867-1185

Waterfront Hotel Lahug
I Salinas Drive, Lahug Cebu City
Tel. (6332) 232-6888/Fax (6332) 232-6880

Mactan Island Resort
Punta Engaño Road. Lapu Lapu. Cebu
Tel. (632) 231-0288/Fax (632) 231-1688

Waterfront Hotel Mactan
I Airport Road, Lapu Lapu City, 6015
Tel. (6332) 340-4888/Fax (6332) 340-5693

The Marco Polo
CM Recto St., Davao City 8000
Tel. (082) 221-0888/Fax (082) 225-0111

Royal Mandaya Hotel
J. Palma Gil St., Davao City
Tel. (082) 225-8888/Fax (082) 225-1888

Camp John Hay Manor
Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0231 to 50/845-0892/845-0911
Fax. (074) 445-0420

Hotel Veniz
No. 1 Abanao St., Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0700 / Fax. (074) 446-0704

Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93/(074) 447-8895 to 98
Fax. (074) 447-0494

City Travel Hotel
15 Kisad Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 445-0456/Fax (074) 445-0457

Hotel Supreme
113 Magsaysay Ave., Baguio City
Tel. (074) 443-2011 to 18 / Fax. (074)
442-2855

Skyrise Hotel
18 Dominican Road, Baguio city
Tel (074) 445-6834 to 36/Fax(074)443-3897

Golden Pine Hotel and Restaurant
Intersection of Cariño St and Legarda Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 444-9965 to 72/ 740-8975 / Fax. (074) 446-0704

Taal Vista Hotel
Aguinaldo Highway. Tahaytay City
Tel (046) 413-1000 / Fax (046) 413-1225

For feedback and inquiries, call
899-4426 or 897-8808 loc 209

DUSIT'S 'ANNIVERSARY GIFT'

Exquisite lunch meals from master chefs

> For only P390 per person, guests may choose to dine at The Café to savor Asian and international Buffet

DUSIT Hotel Nikko, after a $35-million renovation program, is vigorous and bustling with activities as it goes well on its way to its seventh year. Continuing to enjoy warm patronage, the deluxe hotel has an anniversary gift to the public, as it presents a new set of exquisite lunch meals at all its outlets. For only P390 per person, guests may choose to dine at The Café to savor Asian and international buffet or try sumptuous set lunch menus at any of Dusit's authentic specialty restaurants – Benkay Japanese Restaurant, Benjarong Royal Thai Cuisine and Thien Duong Vietnamese Cuisine.

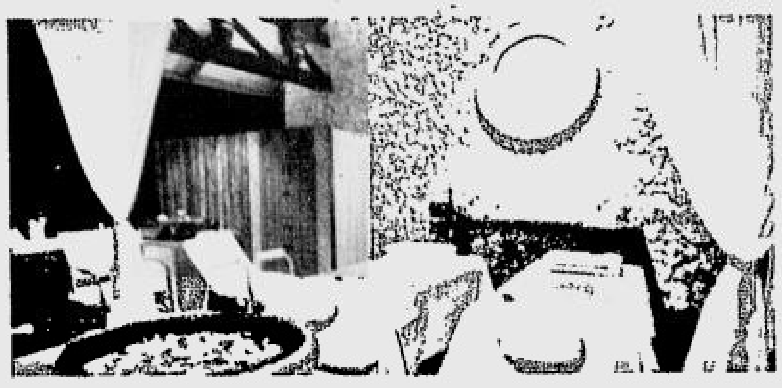
Expertly prepared by Dusit's master chefs, exceptional set lunch selections include Tori-Kuwayari, Tonkatsu, Tempura and Sashimi Sets at Benkay Japanese Restaurant; Tom Yam Talay (Favorite Thai hot mix seafood) with Neua Phad Nam Hoy (Sauteed Beef with Oyster Sauce, Steamed Rice) and Morakot Krob (Jellied water chestnut with coconut milk in crushed ice), Tom Kha Gai (Chicken in coconut milk) with Moo Phad Bai Kraprao (fried minced pork with chili and basil leaves, steamed rice) and *Ruam Mit Chao Wang* (Water chestnut, young coconut and jackfruit in syrup with coconut milk) at Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant; and Pho Do Bien (Noodle Soup with Seafood) with Ca Chem Sot Chua Ngot (Fried Fish in sweet sour sauce / steamed rice) and Trai Cay (Fresh Fruit Slices), Goi Cuon (Fresh Spring Roll) with Suon Sot Chua Ngot (Sweet and Sour Pork with Steamed Rice) and Trai Cay (Fresh fruit slices) at Thien Duong Vietnamese Cuisine.

For inquiries and reservations, call 867-3333 extensions 3301 – 3304 or e-mail foodbvmnl@dusit.com.

Benkay
CAFE
THIEN DUONG
VIETNAMESE

Rejuvenating holiday at The Barcelo Pearl Farm Island Resort

NESTLED on the quiet side of Samal Island, The Barceló Pearl Farm Island Resort is an ideal refuge for travelers who would like to get away from the hurly burly of city life. With its tranquil setting of lush vegetation, white sand beaches, flourishing flora and fauna and deluxe accommodations that perfectly blend with its natural surroundings, the resort beckons with the promise of relaxing and private retreat, under the care of its utterly friendly and charming staff.



Putting into heart the rigors that life brings to busy and hardworking people, the resort created a special Spa Offer designed for individuals who would like to reap the rewards of their hard work. The "Rejuvenate Package" was created to treat guests to invigorating health therapies and other forms of pampering at the resort's Ylang-Ylang Soothing Lounge.

The Barceló Pearl Farm's Ylang-Ylang Soothing Lounge is located within a garden of vegetation amidst a man-made cascading waterfall. It indulges your senses to a wide range of soothing beauty and health treatments using natural ingredients known for their healing and wellness effect for the mind, body and spirit. One will surely enjoy an hour of body and beauty treatments from skilled therapists while the sea breeze and the waving coconut palms gently caress one to a sleeping lull.

The "Rejuvenate Package" is priced (based on Twin/Triple Sharing) for only $224 per person for the Samal Houses and $299 per person for the Samal Suites. During the stay, guests will enjoy two nights and three days accommodation, welcome drink, two breakfasts, round-trip airport and boat transportation service, complimentary use of selected non-motorized aqua sports facilities, one hour body massage, and two treatments at the Soothing Lounge. This special offer is valid until Dec. 15.

For more information about the "Rejuvenate Package" or other special offers of the Barceló Pearl Farm Island Resort, call the Manila sales office at 867-1159. Visit www.barcelo-asia.com.

A perfect vision come true

20/20 IS AN entertainment center with a music lounge, main and sports bar on the top floor (20th floor) of Alabang's best-kept secret, The Bellevue Manila—the only 5-star hotel South of the metro. 20/20 recently had a soft launch attended by more than 300 corporate clients. There were enchanting music and lively entertainment by an acoustic band and a sultry lounger singer. The guests enjoyed complimentary Asian and international hot and cold canapés, as well as an open bar which lasted until 10 p.m. The attendees also participated in a raffle that had 20 winners of overnight stays for two and dinner buffet gift certificates at Bellevue's Café d' Asie Asian Specialty Restaurant. 20/20 is a fun place to spend quiet, relaxing evenings. Music lovers can enjoy their favorite melodies while taking in the panoramic views of the famed Manila Bay sunset, scenic Tagaytay, Laguna de Bay, the Alabang residential areas and the Makati skyline.

NEW WORLD RENAISSANCE HOTEL CITED FOR FIRE SAFETY

THE NEW World Renaissance Hotel was given a plaque of commendation by the City of Makati, Rotary Club of Makati, Makati Commercial Estate Association Inc., and Makati Fire Safety Foundation, during the Fifth Annual Fire Safety Compliance Awards Program. The recognition was given to the New World Renaissance Hotel as it has satisfactorily complied with the fire prevention and safety requirements of the Fire Code and the National Building Code of the Philippines and their implementing rules and regulations. Furthermore, the deluxe property was cited for its having a model building in terms of completeness, installation, maintenance and periodic testing, and upkeep of its fire prevention and safety systems. Shown with the plaque are hotel executives, from left, resident manager Atab Rivera, chief security Jun Trinidad, director of engineering Roger Urbiztondo, and general manager Stephan Stoss.

People, Events & Products

Philamlife lauds peak performers

PHILAMLIFE, the largest and most diversified insurance company in the Philippines, will hold its 2003 National Recognition Program "Gabi ng Parangal" from April 24 to 26 at the Edsa Shangri-La Plaza Hotel, Mandaluyong City.

With the theme "Breaking Barriers", the recognition program will be a gathering of the company's close to 400 career agents and agency leaders whose commendable and superior sales performance has supported the company's continued growth and market leadership in the life insurance agency.

Philamlife president and CEO Jose L. Cuisia Jr. will lead the company's key executives in honoring the agency leaders and agents who satisfied the production requirements of the fiscal year 2002 Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT), Premier Agents Club, Associates of the Year and other special Honor Clubs.

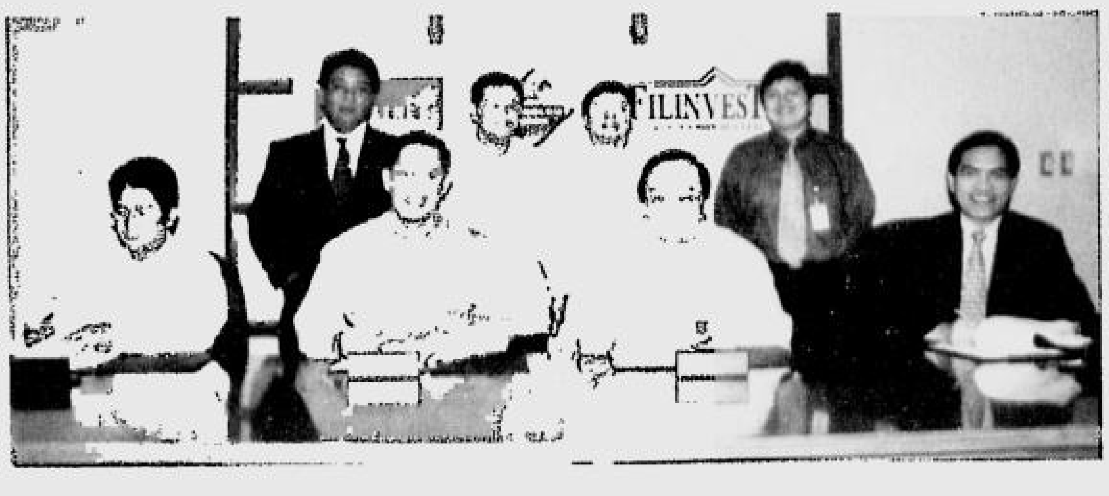
One of the highlights of the event will be a winners' forum featuring keynote speaker former president Corazon C. Aquino who will do a motivational platform presentation.

Other activities lined up for the three-day affair include an all-night sing-and-dance party with the retro music of Moonstruck band and a two-night Filipiñiana-inspired gala awards.

Among the guest performers are songwriter Jose Mari Chan, diva Rachel Alejandro, musical group The Company, Miss Saigon veteran Isay Alvarez, stage singer Robert Seña, veteran newscaster Daniel Razon, Lifestyle show host and TV journalist Cheri Mercado, and Binibining Pilipinas 2001 Zora Ruth Andam.

Philamlife, the recognized leader in the life insurance industry, which boasts of more than 8,000 people in its agency force, has consistently honored its dedicated and committed agents through its annual agency recognition program.

Philamlife is affiliated with American International Group (AIG), the leading US-based international insurance and financial services organization.



PLDT, FILINVEST DEAL

PLDT and Filinvest Land Inc. recently signed a deal involving the provision of information and communications services to the locators of Filinvest Technology Park Calamba (FTPC) in Laguna. FTPC is part of the 350-hectare Ciudad de Calamba township development of Filinvest Land strategically located in Calamba, Laguna, at the heart of the Calbarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) growth area. In photo are (from left, front row) Renato Castaneda, PLDT regional sales division head; Godofredo Asunto, PLDT corporate sales and credit administration center head; Joseph Yap, Filinvest president; Arnold Canaria, Filinvest senior manager for business development; (from left, back row) Chris Cordero, PLDT corporate solutions executive; lawyer Jay Lopez, PLDT associate attorney; lawyer Apollo Escares, Filinvest legal counsel; Ronaldo Mendoza, PLDT South Luzon sales 1 head.

ALL DIGITAL SOUND

AYALA CINEMAS

PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE 2 WHAT A GIRL WANTS 3 JOHNNY ENGLISH 4 ANGER MANAGEMENT	WHAT A GIRL WANTS 2 PHONE BOOTH THX GUARANTEED SEATS JOHNNY ENGLISH 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 4 A MAN APART THE JUNGLE BOOK 2 ANGER MANAGEMENT 7 EQUILIBRIUM	ArtFilm 1 TITUS (Advance Screenings) 12:20, 3:20, 6:20, 9:20 JOHNNY ENGLISH 12:00, 2:10, 4:15, 6:20, 8:25 Onstage ACOUSTIC NIGHT OUT SERIES May 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 & 31	THX GUARANTEED SEATS JOHNNY ENGLISH 1:00, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30 THX GUARANTEED SEATS ANGER MANAGEMENT 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE RECRUIT 12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS 4 WHAT A GIRL WANTS 12:50, 2:55, 5:00, 7:05, 9:10, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS 5 PHONE BOOTH 12:25, 2:15, 4:05, 5:55, 7:45, 9:35, 11:25	THX ANGER MANAGEMENT JOHNNY ENGLISH 3 WHAT A GIRL WANTS 4 THE JUNGLE BOOK 2 PHONE BOOTH

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Reserve your seats by texting **SURESEATS GB3** or **SURESEATS G4** and send to **2333**. Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2 (SDDS)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
3 (DTS)	PHONE BOOTH
4 GOLD	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
6 GOLD (SDDS)	EQUILIBRIUM
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
8	JUNGLE BOOK-2
9	SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE
10	THE CORE

Pearl Plaza Cinemas

(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA ①②&③

(Pasay) tel 833.3290 , 833.3274

1	PUNLA
2	BOLD STAR
3	EQUILIBRIUM

starmall Movies

www.clickthecity.com.ph (Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
2	A MAN APART
3	SEC DRIVE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5	PUNLA

METROPOLIS star

www.clickthecity.com.ph (Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	A MAN APART
2	PHONE BOOTH
3	PUNLA
4	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5	ANGER MANAGEMENT
6	EQUILIBRIUM

M star

www.clickthecity.com.ph (Las Pinas) tel 873.5004

1	KANGAROO JACK
2	A MAN APART

PREMIERE CINEMA THX

(Makati City) TEL. 8934225, 8922503

Center Plaza Cinema

(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	THE CORE
2	THE RECRUIT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC

tel 930.9515

1	PUNLA
2	BOLD STAR
3	

Sunshine

(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	GOLDEN BULLET
2	MALDITA
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City

(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	A MAN APART
4	ANGER MANAGEMENT
5	PHONE BOOTH
6	JUNGEL BOOK-2
7 (DTS)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
8 (SDDS)	EQUILIBRIUM
9 (DOLBY)	JOHNNY ENGLISH

Gotesco Caloocan

tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central

(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	A MAN APART
2	JUNGLE BOOK-2
3	PUNLA
4 (SDDS)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5	ANGER MANAGEMENT
6 (DOLBY)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
7 (DTS)	EQUILIBRIUM
8	PHONE BOOTH
9	SEX DRIVE

Gotesco Commonwealth

tel 951.0082

1	ANGER MANAGEMENT
2 (SDDS)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
3 (DTS)	PHONE BOOTH
4 (DOLBY)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5	A MAN APART

Gotesco Ortigas

tel 656.6795

1	A MAN APART
2	JOHNNY ENGLISH
3	ANGER MANAGEMENT
4	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
5 (SDDS)	PHONE BOOTH

Universal

(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH

Sampaquita

(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	SEX DRIVE

Dilson

(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	PUNLA
Lords	BOLD STAR
Jennet	RESERVE

Mandaluyong

tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2	PUNLA
3	PHONE BOOTH
4	WHAT A GIRL WANTS

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA

tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	A MAN APART
2	JOHNNY ENGLISH
3	PUNLA
4	PHONE BOOTH
5	BOLD STAR

FRC Cinema

(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema

(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 879.2029

1	SHE WALKS BY NIGHT
2	PUNLA

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT

Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7

tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	EQUILIBRIUM
2	A MAN APART
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
4 (SDDS)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5 (DTS)	PHONE BOOTH
6	JUNGLE BOOK 2
7	WHAT A GIRL WANTS

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS

tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	A MAN APART
2	BOLD STAR

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall

(Sta. Rosa Laguna) TEL. (049) 837-0926

1	RING-2
2	VIRGIN PEOLPLE
3 (DTS)	JOHNNY ENGLISH

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	PHONE BOOTH
2 (DTS)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
3 (DOLBY)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
4	ANGER MANAGEMENT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
2 (DOLBY)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
3 (DTS)	PHONE BOOTH
4	ANGER MANAGEMENT

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	THE RECRUIT
2	SEX DRIVE
3 (DOLBY)	THE CORE
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown

(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	THE CORY QUIRINO STORY
2	THE RECRUIT
3 (DOLBY)	RING-2
4	JUST MARRIED

Magic Star Cinema

(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	JUST MARRIED
2 (DTS)	THE CORY QUIRINO STORY
3	THE RECRUIT

Lianas Cinema

(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	JAILBIRD
2	
3 (DTS)	BATANG MAGDALENA
4	PUNLA

Lianas MovieCity

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
2	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
3 (DTS)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
4	PHONE BOOTH
5	WILLARD

Olivarez Tri-Cinema

(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
3	VIRGIN PEOLE

Olivarez Los Baños

tel (049) 249.2558

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
3	VIRGIN PEOLE

Mega Center Mall

(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	SOLARIS
2	JUST MARRIED
3 (DTS)	THE CORE
4	THE RECRUIT

Cabuyao

(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

Emperor

(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	DREAMCATCHER
2	VIRGIN PEOPLE
3	RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall

(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	THE CORE
2	THE RECRUIT
3	KANGAROO JACK
4	THE EYE

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
2	RING-2
3	JOHNNY ENGLISH
4	KANGAROO JACK

Cine Nepo Mall

(Angeles City) te (045) 887-0121

1	KANGAROO JACK
2	ANGER MANAGEMENT
3 (DOLBY)	NATIONAL SECURITY
4	JOHNNY ENGLISH

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Level 4

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Filinvest - Alabang

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1	PHONE BOOTH
2	JUNGLE BOOK 2
3	A MAN APART
4	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5	EQUILIBRIUM
6	BOLDSTAR
7	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
8	ANGER MANAGEMENT

SM CENTERPOINT

7149522 -7161416

1	A MAN APART
2	BOLDSTAR
3	EQUILIBRIUM
4	PUNLA
5	JOHNNY ENGLISH
6	JUNGLE BOOK 2
7	ANGER MANAGEMENT
8	THE CORE
9	PHONE BOOTH
10	WHAT A GIRL WANTS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

9350749

1	JUNGLE BOOK 2
2	EQUILIBRIUM
3	KANGAROO JACK
4	PHONE BOOTH
5	JOHNNY ENGLISH
6	BOLDSTAR
7	A MAN APART
8	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
9	ANGER MANAGEMENT
10	THE CORE
11	SEX DRIVE
12	PUNLA

SM CITY MANILA

5239240

1	A MAN APART
2	ANGER MANAGEMENT
3	JUNGLE BOOK 2
4	JOHNNY ENGLISH
5	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
6	PHONE BOOTH
7	PUNLA
8	SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE
9	EQUILIBRIUM
10	THE CORE
11	KANGAROO JACK
12	BOLDSTAR

SM MEGAMALL

6331901 • 6329401

1	THE CORE
2	PHONE BOOTH
3	EQUILIBRIUM
4	ANGER MANAGEMENT
5	JOHNNY ENGLISH
6	JUNGLE BOOK 2
7	PUNLA
8	SOLARIS
9	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
10	A MAN APART
11	SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE
12	BOLDSTAR

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

9295452

1	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
2	JOHNNY ENGLISH
3	EQUILIBRIUM
4	PHONE BOOTH
5	JUNGLE BOOK 2
6	ANGER MANAGEMENT
7	PUNLA
8	BOLDSTAR

SM SOUTHMALL

8066888

1	SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE
2	JUNGLE BOOK 2
3	A MAN APART
4	ANGER MANAGEMENT
5	PUNLA
6	PHONE BOOTH
7	JOHNNY ENGLISH
8	EQUILIBRIUM
9	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
10	BOLDSTAR

SM CITY CEBU

2313876

1	THE RECRUIT
2	JOHNNY ENGLISH
3	KANGAROO JACK
4	BOLDSTAR
5	FINAL DESTINATION 2
6	SEX & ZEN 2
7	NATIONAL SECURITY
8	EQUILIBRIUM

SM CITY ILOILO

3209422

1	JUST MARRIED
2	CLOSED
3	WILD THORNBERRYS MOVIE
4	NATIONAL SECURITY
5	SOLARIS
6	JOHNNY ENGLISH
7	CLOSED
8	BOLDSTAR

SM CITY PAMPANGA

7128015

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2	ANGER MANAGEMENT
3	EQUILIBRIUM
4	BOLDSTAR
5	NATIONAL SECURITY
6	KANGAROO JACK

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT

8294975

1	PHONE BOOTH
2	JOHNNY ENGLISH
3	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
4	A MAN APART

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN

2514302

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2	PUNLA
3	A MAN APART
4	BOLD STAR

SM CITY DAVAO

2976998

1	EQUILIBRIUM
2	JUST MARRIED
3	FINAL DESTINATION 2
4	SOLARIS
5	NATIONAL SECURITY
6	JOHNNY ENGLISH

SM BICUTAN

776-3055

1	PHONE BOOTH
2	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
3	JOHNNY ENGLISH
4	A MAN APART

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

859-2084

1	JOHNNY ENGLISH
2	FINAL DESTINATION
3	KANGAROO JACK
4	THE RECRUIT

THE PODIUM CINEMA

633-0976

1	PHONEBOOTH 11:30 FS/12:00 MF/1:50/3:40/5:30/7:20/ 9:10/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:20 END
2	JOHNNY ENGLISH 11:00 MF/1:00/3:00/5:00/7:00/9:00/ 10:25 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:25 END

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THX	JOHNY ENGLISH 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00 LMF, 9:30 END
2	JOHNY ENGLISH
3	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
4	EQUILIBRIUM
5	ANGER MANAGEMENT
6	PHONE BOOTH
7	JUNGLE BOOK
8	SHADOW OF VAMPIRE
9	A MAN APART
10	BOLD STAR

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema P75 level cinemas
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Ermita

536 -7809- 12

1	JOHNY ENGLISH
2	EQUILIBRIUM
3	JUNGLE BOOK 2
4	PHONE BOOTH
5	ANGER MANAGEMENT
6	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
7	A MAN APART

Metro East - Marcos hway

682- 8193 / 8280

1	JUNGLE BOOK
2	A MAN APART
3	JOHNY ENGLISH
4	EQUILIBRIUM
5	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
6	ANGER MANAGEMENT
7	PHONE BOOTH
8	BOLD STAR

Novaliches

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1	EQUILIBRIUM
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3	A MAN APART
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6	JUNGLE BOOK
7	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
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5	EQUILIBRIUM
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3	ANGER MANAGEMENT
4	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
5	BOLD STAR

Bacolod

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2	JUST MARRIED
3	NATIONAL SECURITY
4	WILLARD
5	EQUILIBRIUM
6	SEX DRIVE

Iloilo

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1	JOHNY ENGLISH
2	JUST MARRIED
3	NATIONAL SECURITY
4	SOLARIS
5	BOLD STAR
6	FINAL DESTINATION

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Verder saga continues

SHOWTIME

THE SAGA of the Verder brothers, Lemuel (Christopher de Leon) and Waldo (Richard Gomez), continues as the GMA 7 telenovela, "Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw," reaches its climax and opens a new chapter this week.

Lani Mercado plays the wife of Lemuel and Alice Dixon is the wife of Waldo.Book 1 closes with the death of their daughter Elmina (Karen de los Reyes) and the return of another long-lost daughter, Mariella (Angel Locsin).

Then Verder patriarch Donato (Armando Goyena) dies, and his burial brings together the feuding brothers, their wives and the other characters played by Barbara Perez, Boots Anson Roa, Chubi del Rosario, Polo Ravales, Mark Gil, plus Armida Siguion Reyna and Imee Marcos.

Armida has a cameo role in the climax of Book 1, crossing over from the GMA 7 soap "Kung Mawawala Ka," where she plays the acting Philippine president. Imee continues her lawyer role in Book 2, aptly titled "Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw Pa Rin" and set in the corporate world, where the stakes are bigger and deadlier.

Book 2 opens with the disclosure of the patriarch's will, which pits Lemuel and Waldo against each other.

Directed by Joyce Bernal and Lore Reyes, "Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw Pa Rin" airs Mondays to Fridays after "Habang Kapiling Ka."

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	EQUILIBRIUM
Ali 2	A MAN APART
Ali 3	ANGER MANAGEMENT
Ali 4	JOHNNY ENGLISH
Ali 5	PHONE BOOTH
Ali 6	JUNGLE BOOK 2
Ali 7	WHAT A GIRL WANTS

FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS

Farmers 1	A MAN APART
Farmers 2	BOLD STAR

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ODEON	BOLDSTAR
ODEON-2	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL/ BATAS ANG UUSIG
ROBEN	PUNLA
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	HARRY POTTER [illegible]
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	PUNLA
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	PUNLA
REMAR	BOLDSTAR
REMAR-2	PUNLA
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A	PUNLA
B	BOLD STAR
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
CINEMA-2	THE JUNGLE BOOK 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KASIPING
CINEMA-2	BOLDSTAR
CINEMA-3	PUNLA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PHONE BOOTH
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	KANGAROO JACK
CINEMA-6	SEX DRIVE
CINEMA-7	THE CORE
CINEMA-8	KAULAYAW
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
CINEMA-12	A MAN APART
CINEMA-14	EQUILIBRIUM
CINEMA-15	JUNGLE BOOK 2
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	[illegible]
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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JUNGLE BOOK 2 GP **EQUILIBRIUM** R13	**ANGER MANAGEMENT** R13 1:00,3:20,5:40, 8:00,10:20	**PHONE BOOTH** R13 12:35,2:30,4:25, 6:20,8:15,10:10
WHAT A GIRL WANTS GP 1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00	**A MAN APART** R13 12:25,2:45,5:05, 7:25,9:45	**JOHNNY ENGLISH** P13 12:10,2:10,4:10, 6:10,8:10,10:10

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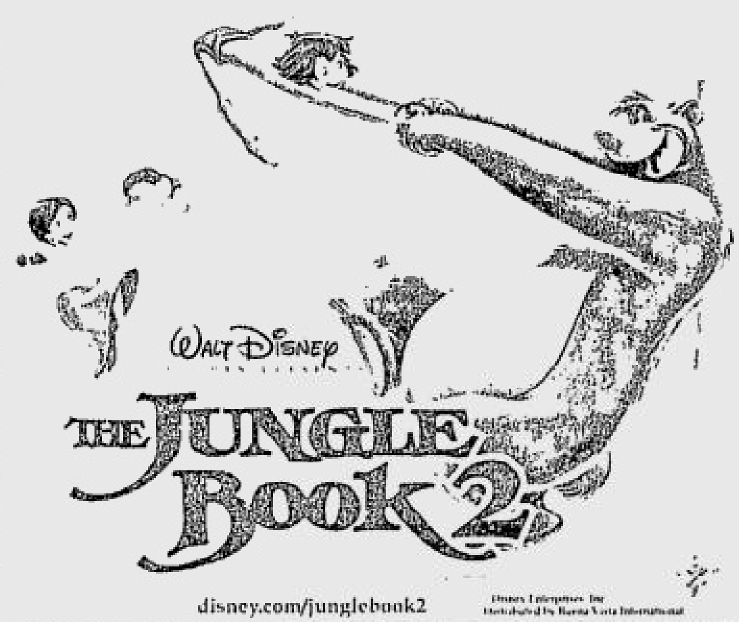

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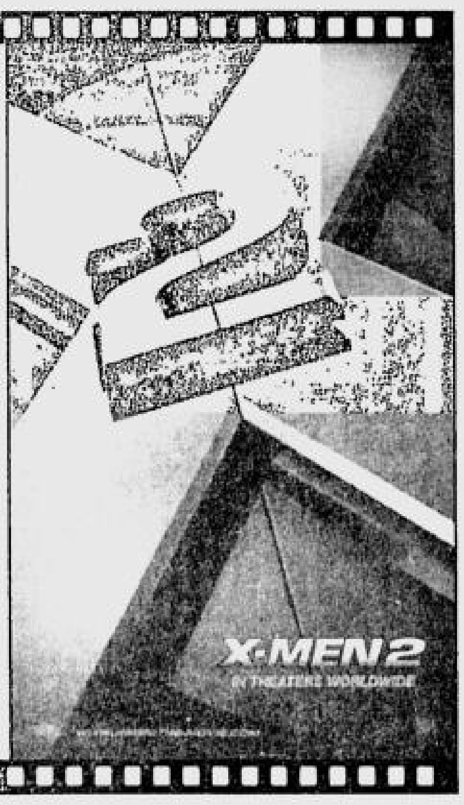

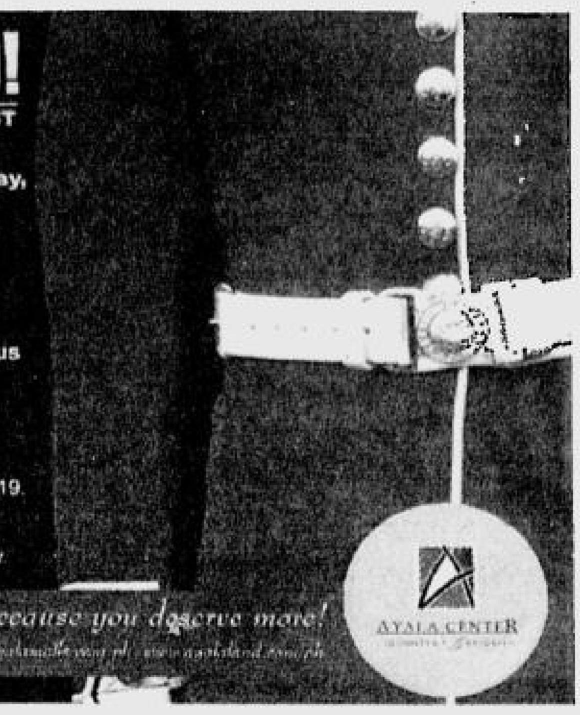

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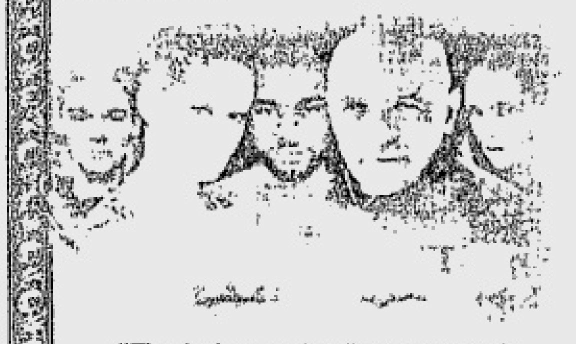

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Love, revenge and power form a deadly struggle in this fierce Roman drama by Shakespeare.

T I T U S

ANTHONY HOPKINS & JESSICA LANGE
Harry J. Lennix, Alan Cumming, Laura Fraser

In this epic tale of revenge based upon the play of William Shakespeare, Anthony Hopkins stars as Titus Andronicus, the Roman general who sows the seeds of vengeance when he executes the son of the enemy Queen, played by Jessica Lange. The repercussions of his action are revealed when the vindictive woman becomes the new wife of the Roman Emperor.

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Adam Sandler, Jack Nicholson offer non-stop laughs in fun, new comedy

In the No. 1 comedy in America, Adam Sandler and Jack Nicholson star together for the first time as patient and therapist -- though at times it's hard to tell which one is which!

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May 10	11am, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm
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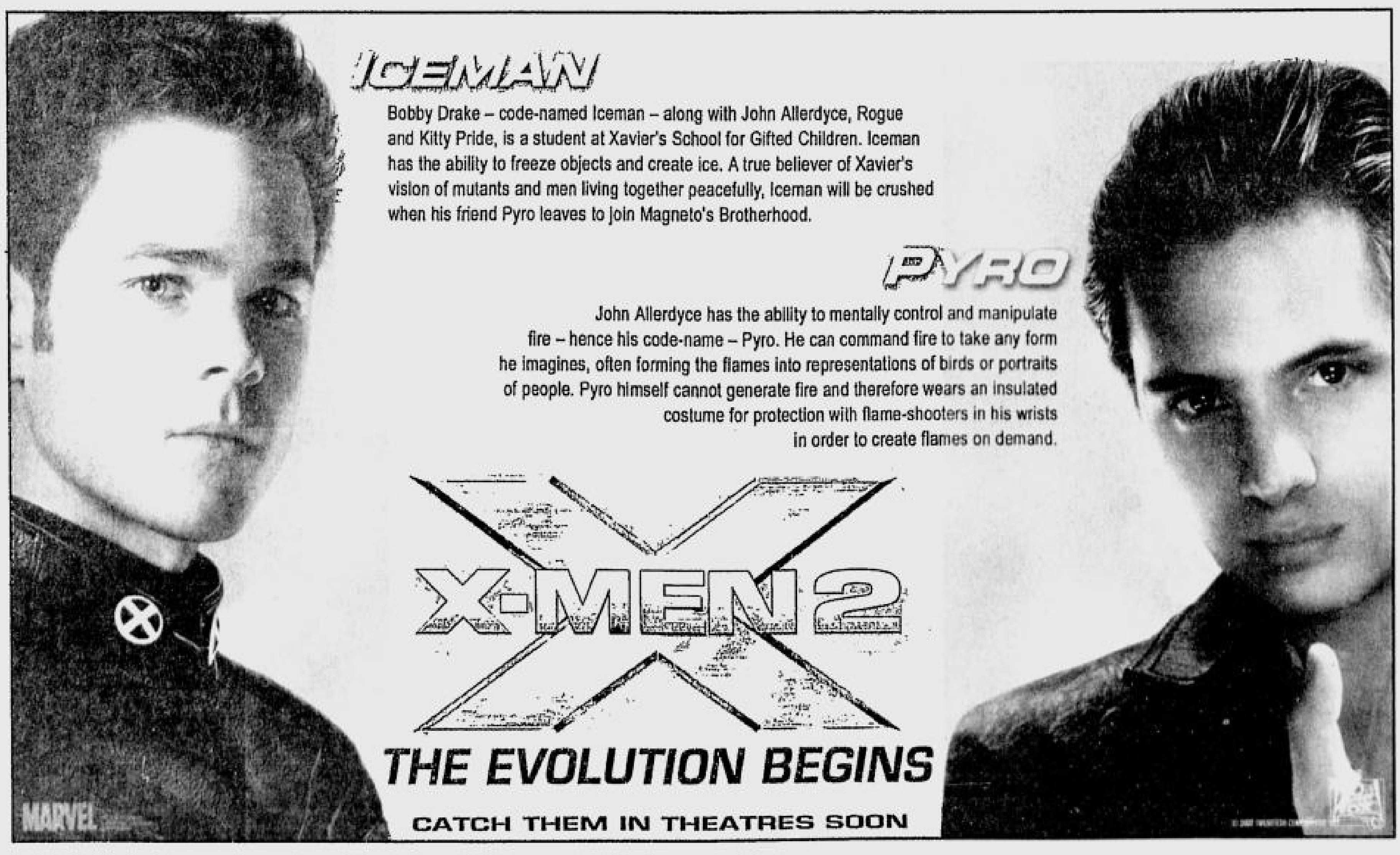

ICEMAN

Bobby Drake – code-named Iceman – along with John Allerdyce, Rogue and Kitty Pride, is a student at Xavier's School for Gifted Children. Iceman has the ability to freeze objects and create ice. A true believer of Xavier's vision of mutants and men living together peacefully, Iceman will be crushed when his friend Pyro leaves to join Magneto's Brotherhood.

PYRO

John Allerdyce has the ability to mentally control and manipulate fire – hence his code-name – Pyro. He can command fire to take any form he imagines, often forming the flames into representations of birds or portraits of people. Pyro himself cannot generate fire and therefore wears an insulated costume for protection with flame-shooters in his wrists in order to create flames on demand.

X-MEN 2

THE EVOLUTION BEGINS

CATCH THEM IN THEATRES SOON

Karen wanted to be Donna Karan, Cindy Crawford or a singer

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

WHEN IT'S another bad news day, news reader **Karen Davila**'s pleasant aura (on ABS-CBN'S 'Headlines," weekdays, 10:30 p.m.) on TV helps save the day. Karen doesn't come on too strong but neither is she just another pretty talking head. On her daily radio program, "Pasada Sais Trenta" (DZMM, 4:30-6 p.m., weekdays), she is always in control of the discussion.

How has motherhood changed you?

Motherhood has changed me completely. When **David Joshua** was born last year, one of my biggest fears was if I would be a good mother. My son is now 1 year and 2 months old and everyday with him is like being in a parenting class. I have become kinder, gentler, more patient and more playful. I've also learned love on another level—selfless, unconditional, without expectations. I'm extremely grateful that God has blessed me with a son. Oprah once said, "Motherhood is the most important role a woman could play." It's true. I'm now responsible for another person's life. It's a remarkable privilege and a destiny one should embrace.

How do you balance being a mom and a working girl at the same time, especially now that your son is in the formative years?

Anchoring "Headlines" nightly, I used to feel guilty not being able to lull my son to sleep. By the time I get home past midnight, David would be safely tucked in. My mom told me to value the moments I have with David when he is awake. Now that's quality time.

When I don't have a coverage for "The Correspondents," I am home with David. We read together, pray together, play building blocks, watch TV commercials (he loves them!), swim, walk, and go malling.

I talk to my son all the time. I tell him I love him, a lot. And when it's a light day, I bring David to the radio booth. He's at home with the DZMM staff. I try not to bring work home.

What kind of a mother are you? Are you as driven as a mom as you are as a broadcast journalist?

Well, I have a vision of the mom I dream and pray of becoming. I want to be loving but firm. Having a baby isn't really the challenge, it's raising a child. I want to be the kind of parent who's there for my child, who will raise him in an environment that's loving and open, and most of all, train him in the ways of the Lord. I want my son to know Jesus personally.

I AM where I am because of God's grace, says Karen.

Would you give up your career to be a full-time mother?

If it means raising my child in a better way, I would. But I'm hoping I never have to make that choice. Just because a woman works doesn't make her a part-time mother. I am a full time mother wherever I am. When I'm at work, David is always with a family member, either one of his grandparents.

Your husband DJ Sta. Ana is also working in the news and current affairs department of ABS-CBN. Don't you ever have clashes of opinions over certain news items? Where do you draw the line between work and the domestic front?

My husband is the news director, and fortunately, I don't work directly under him. I produce for "The Correspondents," a current affairs program. For the past eight years of my broadcasting career, I've worked for an investigative magazine program, which I enjoy. When DJ comes home, we hardly talk about work. Our jobs are stressful enough, so when we're home, we try to lighten things up.

If there's one moment in history you wished you witnessed, what would it be?

I wish I covered Baghdad.

Who are the personalities you dream to interview?

Dr. **Carlo Urbani**, who discovered SARS. He's dead.

Any favorite interview subject?

Analisa, the laundrywoman dreaming of becoming a Japayuki. She was a major case study for an episode I did for "The Correspondents," "Ang Bagong Mukha ng Japayuki." She dreams of becoming a singer in Japan but she can't hit one note right. But what I like about her is her determination and her will. It came out in the interview. She didn't blink, wasn't ashamed of who she is, and spoke her heart and mind very clearly.

Growing up, were you watching the news already?

Are you kidding? I wanted to be **Donna Karan**, the fashion designer, or **Cindy Crawford** but I accepted I was too short. The first news people I watched were **Cheche Lazaro** and **Loren Legarda**. I was in second year college in UP.

How would you rate news reporting Pinoy style?

Good news reporting is universal. Accurate, balanced, factual. But good reporting also involves interpreting the news and helping people understand the story. I think that's what we all need. A deeper perspective on issues, not just reporting the day to day events but being able to report about the consequences and effects of a certain event. Then we not only inform but also educate the viewer.

Sensational reporting is not good reporting. But remember, it doesn't mean the alternative is bland reporting. There's a way to attract the viewer's attention, like getting the hook of a story.

What's the most important lesson you've learned in your career?

I'm a broadcast journalist because I know I can make a difference. It's a calling. Each time I do a story and people react, I am happy. When I go on radio each day, and I am able to teach and inform listeners about issues that affect them, I'm fulfilled. I also know I'm where I am because of God's grace and his goodness.

Any role models?

Cheche Lazaro for her grace, kindness and unquestionable integrity. My mother, for her faith, perseverance and resilience. My sister, for her love for the Lord. **Hillary Clinton**, for her strength and intelligence.

How do you define credibility?

I once read the measure of being a good news anchor isn't how well you read the news but that you are believed when you read the news. Credibility is when you are believed and trusted.

What fantasy have you always nurtured?

The truth? I've always wanted to be a singer. The problem is, I can't sing.

DID YOU KNOW...

When **Luis Manzano** is not busy doing his VJ stints on Studio 23, he is often seen at Greenbelt 3, where he watches movies with his friends who are not from show biz. Luis also frequents the Famous dessert bar on the fourth level of Greenbelt 3. The place is owned by famous stars **Martin Nievera**, **Vina Morales**, **Eric Quizon** and publicist **Keren Pascual**.

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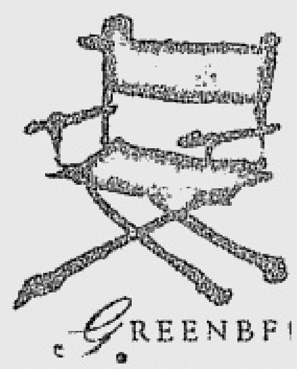

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Perverted search for truth and justice

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"PHONE Booth" has a deceptive beginning: its opening credits sequence looks like the start of a fluffy romantic comedy, like "Pillow Talk."

Then, the mood of the opening visuals changes, and it seems like we're in for a high-tech James Bond-type thriller, with shots of a communications satellite in outer space, intricate phone systems, etc.

Finally, the film settles down to the business at hand, and it turns out to be none of the above, but a one-on-one confrontation with a perverse twist.

Ok, but we wish that director **Joel Schumacher** didn't opt for that misleading opening, and concentrated on telling his story without those baffling stylistic red herrings.

So, what's "Phone Booth" really about? Try this on for size: **Colin Farrell** plays a coldblooded publicist—whose whole life is an elaborate, flamboyant lie—until he gets into a phone booth where he is ordered to stay put by a mysterious caller. If he leaves, or doesn't confess his "sins" to his wife, the caller will shoot him dead!

What's going on here? Is the unseen caller merely a wacko, or is he a modern-day version of God who can be terribly cruel in his search for truth and justice?

At first, the heavily symbolic reverberations hold sway, and the publicist's cool facade crumbles in the face of such an Old-Testament display of righteous anger.

In time, however, the caller ceases to be relentlessly principled and turns erratic and cruelly whimsical, changing the rules of the "game" whenever he pleases. So, he's a wacko, after all.

If so, why is he so hellbent on upholding the moral order in today's cynically immoral and amoral world? We're informed that this isn't the first time that he's threatened to execute a "sinner". Why has he become such an uncompromising serial avenger?

As we watch the film, we ponder on this question despite the paucity of solid leads or real answers. After the rules start to change, however, we feel like we're being taken for a subjective ride by either the mystery caller or the director—or both!

So, we stop trying to make integral sense of what we're seeing, and just react to each sequence as it comes.

Taken as such, Schumacher's movie is divertingly eventful. Farrell's raw and nervy performance makes the protagonist's baffling predicament provocative and empathetic.

But some *non sequiturs* obtrude. Much is made of a gun that the caller has hidden in the booth to implicate the publicist in a pimp's death, but when push comes to shove, the gun turns out to be an unproductive plot device.

The "confrontation" between the two women in the publicist's life is similarly undeveloped. And the responding cops are woefully inept, allowing the caller to do his worst, with impudent impunity.

"Phone Booth" is sort of reminiscent of another movie about a standoff involving cops, "Dog Day Afternoon." But that **Al Pacino** starrer handled its material better, and had much more cogent things to say about guilt, the law, morality, the cops, and mob mentality.

Big surprises

ROWAN **Atkinson**'s latest starrer, "Johnny English," has some big surprises up its sleeve. First, the acclaimed actor, **John Malkovich**, plays an evil Frenchman, complete with really thick French accent. What fun!

Next, singer **Natalie Imbruglia** makes a smashing film debut as a special agent. She does so well in the comedy that she should be getting more film offers soon!

'$100 Taxi Ride' goes to Bali

EXPLORE the mysteries of Bali in the weekly travel show, "$100 Taxi Ride," at 9 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29 on the National Geographic Channel.

The day of the journey is an auspicious one—it's **Buddha**'s birthday, and there's a full moon. There's traditional Balinese dancing, interpreting a morality play and an epic love story. Plus palm reading, bartering, water buffalo and a cockfight.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

DID YOU KNOW...

Leandro Muñoz was sipping coffee at Starbucks across Roxas Boulevard from the US Embassy as early as 7 a.m., with a girl who is definitely not from show biz. Was he or his girlfriend applying for a US visa?

Cogie gets high playing dead in new movie

By Remy M. Umerez
Contributor

COGIE Domingo, the sensitive young actor of "Deathrow" and the TV soap "Kung Mawawala Ka" who continues to be hounded by drug rumors, is playing a dead man in his new movie.

The movie, "Anghel sa Lupa," directed by Jose Javier Reyes, has been in the can since last year. Cogie says it is one of his three best movies so far.

Cogie plays the title role in "Anghel sa Lupa" as widow Dina Bonnevie's son whose soul remains earth-bound and continues to touch the lives of those he loves.

"I am a dead man here," Cogie said of his role in the movie. "How many times could I play such a role in my career? This could be the first and the last, and I am grateful to *Direk* Joey Reyes for choosing me for the part. I am touched when a person shows how much faith he has in me and in my acting. The gesture inspires me a lot."

Despite being touched by the director's trust in him, however, Cogie admitted he couldn't recall the name of his character in the new movie.

Beyond his years

The story of "Anghel sa Lupa" recalls the plots of foreign films like "Ghost," "Heaven Can Wait" and even "The Others." It is also about sibling rivalry and a mother's enduring love.

People who have watched the advance screening of "Anghel sa Lupa" said Cogie's acting depth is far beyond his years.

"Anghel sa Lupa" also stars Maxene Magalona as Cogie's love interest and Alwyn Uytico as his guilt-haunted younger brother. Child actor Jiro Manio and Paolo Ballesteros also play pivotal parts in this story of love and death.

Cogie may have also forgotten the less than a dozen movies he has made in the past four years, but his followers can cite at least two where he shone as an actor.

Dedicated

There is "Yakapin Mo ang Umaga," where he played the troubled, drug-addicted son of Christopher de Leon and Lorna Tolentino.

Listen' to Director Reyes, who also directed that earlier movie, heaping hossana on Cogie for his fine acting. "*Kapag nalusutan mo ang kagalingan nina* Boyet *at* Lorna *sa pag-arte eh magaling ka rin katulad nila*," Reyes said. "Cogie is a dedicated young man who easily absorbs the emotions the situation or story requires."

And there is "Deathrow," directed by Joel Lamangan. In this depressing tale of death convicts, Cogie found himself pitting acting skills with tried, tested and revered old-timers led by Eddie Garcia.

Cogie has also had his share of flops, such as the heavily promoted "Cool Dudes" and "Pakisabi Mo Lang."

On TV, he is seen in a different light in the widely-watched light drama "Kung Mawawala Ka," where he plays Carlitos Valiente, son of Vic Vargas and Marianne de la Riva (who has been killed in a past episode). Cogie's role has a touch of villainy, which he says he likes.

Accusations

It was after "Yakapin Mo ang Umaga" that the drug rumor about him started circulating, probably sparked by his role as an addict.

Asked about the drug rumor, Cogie snapped, "What kind of rumor is that?"

The young actor has also been accused of unprofessionalism, such as being often late, very late, for appointments and for work. Asked about this, Cogie said he has sorted out his schedule just so his work load would be lighter, and he has even given up some projects.

Since this is show biz, the rumors can also be an indication of the young man's popularity. He expects his name to be dragged into more rumors. How will Cogie cope with it?

"Very simple," he replied. "*Kapag totoo, tatakbuhan ko na lang* (I'll just run away)." And then the the fine young actor laughed.

COOL DUDE. Cogie Domingo has been described as a fine, sensitive actor.

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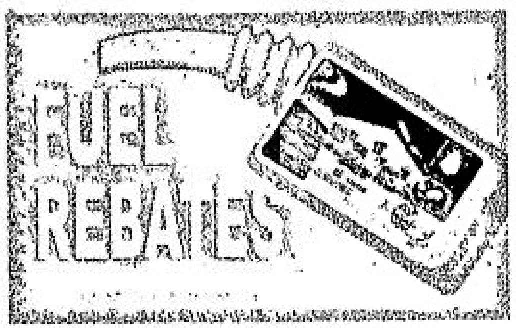

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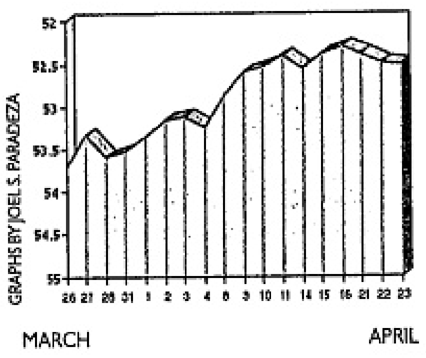

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STOCK MARKET

Stocks end sharply down

SHARES tumbled nearly 3 percent yesterday as concerns about the country's budget deficit triggered profit-taking, traders said.

There were fears that the SARS virus will spread in the Philippines after the recent death of a possible victim but some analysts said the concerns were not yet pervasive enough to have much of an impact on stock prices.

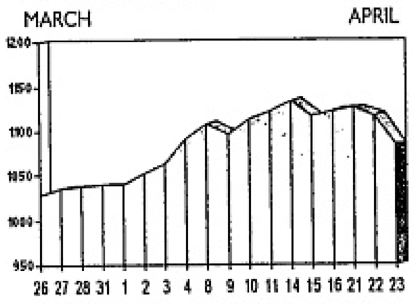
Traders also said the decline was a healthy correction after the market's steep gains in recent weeks.

The main stock index fell 33.24 points or 2.98 percent to 1,083.88, breaching immediate support at the 1,100-point mark. It was the index's biggest point-loss in a single session in more than nine months.

Despite the losses in the last two sessions, the index is up 4.25 per-

STOCKS/ B4

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT will review its economic targets this year to take into account the impact of the global outbreak of the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) virus on domestic growth, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said.

But Camacho told a news briefing that the adverse impact of the SARS phenomenon might be minimal, noting that the country had grown less dependent on exports and foreign demand to spur internal productivity.

"We have to assess whether our expectations on the contribution from those (SARS-affected) economies would affect our expectations enough to make a revaluation," Camacho said.

"It's a continuing evaluation. We keep on asking ourselves how this will affect global businesses," he said.

The government is targeting a growth in gross domestic product by 4.2-5.2 percent this year compared to 4.6-percent growth attained last year.

GDP refers to the total amount of goods and services produced by the domestic economy in a given year.

Camacho said the impact of SARS on the Philippines, which he said was not as badly hit by the outbreak as compared to other countries like China, Hong Kong, Singapore or Canada, would likely be minimal even if a lot of the country's big trading partners were affected.

Last year, the Philippines saw a sharp rebound in exports due to increased trade with Asean countries, offsetting slower demand from traditional markets like the United States and Japan.

"If you recall in 2001, when our exports declined by 16 percent, our GDP growth was not significantly affected. We still grew by 3.2 percent and that is because the nature of our economy is not as export- or as externally dependent," Camacho said.

He noted that the contribution of exports to the country's GDP growth was not as significant as in most Asian countries.

"I'd say, the contribution is less than 10 percent of net exports to GDP," he said.

The manufacturing sector, most of which is export-oriented, accounts for about 70 percent of the output of the industry sector which, in turn, contributes about a quarter of the domestic economy.

The finance chief said the impact of slower mobility as a result of the SARS outbreak might not be as big as the impact of slower trade with SARS-affected countries like Singapore, Hong Kong or China.

"It's more of what happens in our domestic economy that affects our GDP and economic growth," Camacho said.

"On the other hand, there could be some windfall. I hate to think of a windfall from a tragedy like SARS, but to the extent that the Philippines is relatively SARS-free, tourists from abroad, in choosing destinations, we might become more favored as compared to where the SARS is a bigger problem," Camacho said.

He also said the Philippines could be more attractive to multinational corporations diversifying their operations into Asia.

Japanese firms back moratorium on labor strikes

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

JAPANESE businessmen have echoed the call of their Filipino-Chinese peers for the government to adopt a decade-long moratorium on labor strikes to spur more investments and employment in the country.

"That's a good idea," said Japanese Chamber Commerce of the Philippines chair Ryukichi Kawaguchi, referring to the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.'s proposal to impose a 10-year ban on labor strikes.

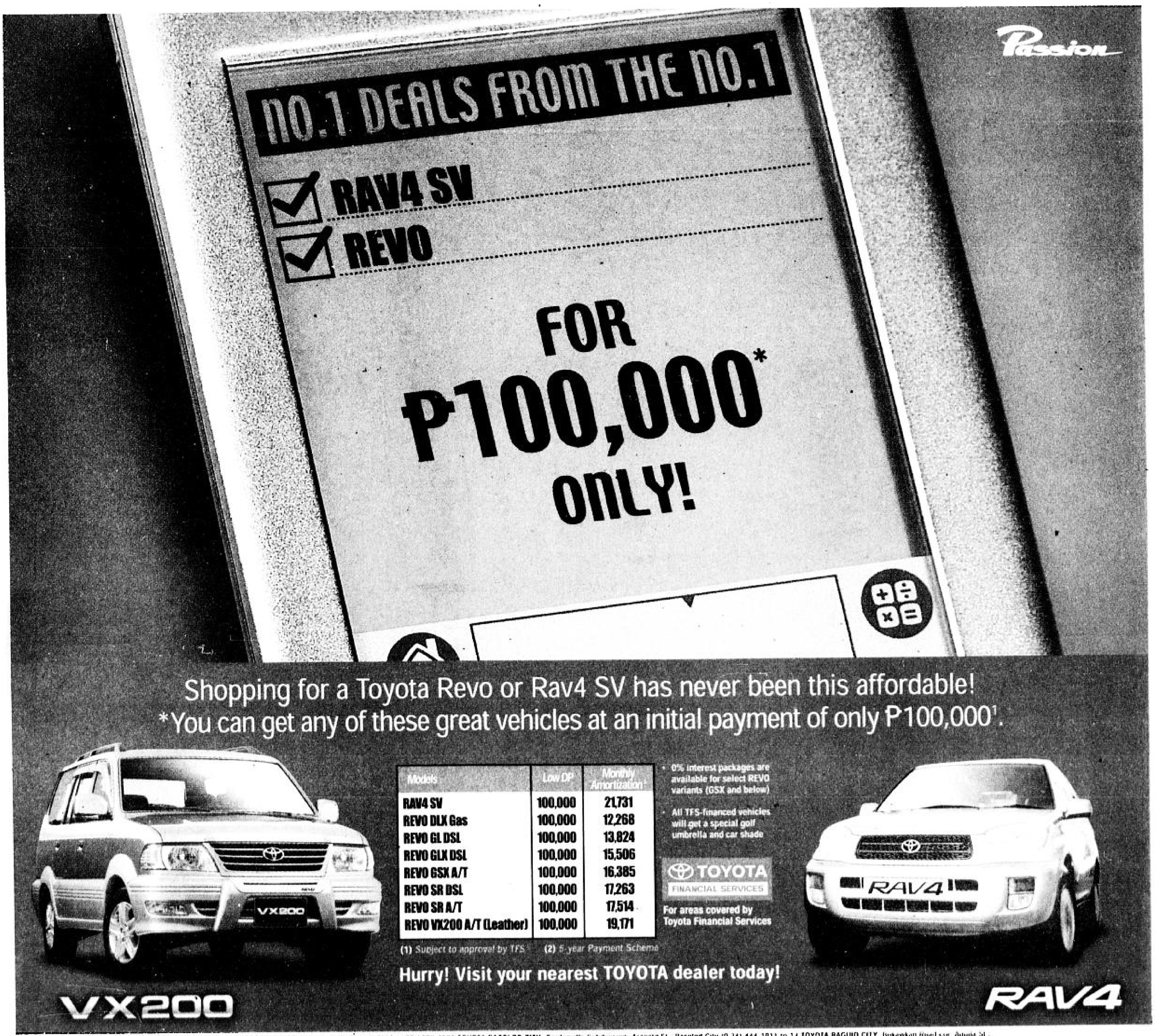
FFCCCI president Robin Sy had made the proposal to solve the country's unemployment problem, which surged to 11.4 percent last year.

Kawaguchi said that the government needed a concrete solution like a strike ban to solve the rising activism among labor unions in the country which has turned away potential investors and frustrated businessmen who have accepted the government's invitation to put their money here.

Kawaguchi complained that the government has made no progress in solving the country's labor problem more than two years after President Macapagal-Arroyo went to Japan to appease automotive giants Toyota and Nissan on their chronic labor woes.

The President formed at least two quick action groups made up of several government agencies to respond to labor-management dispute at the first sign of trouble. However, Kawaguchi said this initiative has only confounded the

JAPANESE/ B4



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Pension pun

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

PRICES of bluechip stocks went up lately. A number of them, in fact, posted a fiesta-time increase of up to 30 percent. To top it all, the run-up happened in just a few days.

And so I asked around if the SSS and the GSIS got into the market, as I have been egging them, so our money in those two pension funds would earn a lot.

No, they did not. They still think that, as an investment policy of the most brilliant kind, investing in the stock market is just too "hard."

I am not kidding. That is what the top guys in those two money suckers say, if you ask them for the reason they are not in the market at all. It is hard!

* * *

BUT that is what we hire all those highly paid "fund managers" for, isn't it? They have to do what is hard. Otherwise, we should have just hired some bubble gums.

I have no pun this time—our two beloved pension funds should manage our own hard-earned money for our own minuscule pension for our own unclear future.

As of this writing, both are still the only pension funds in the whole wide world that do not bother with the stock market at all.

They continue to put all their billions on no-brainer T-bills. As my Apong Oning used to tell my father, "even a secondhand bubble gum can invest in T-bills."

* * *

INVESTING in the stock market is not for everybody precisely because it requires brains. Also, a lot of experience in fund management cannot hurt.

Look, you don't get a dog to get rid of the house mice, and you don't hire a beauty queen to take care of your finances. Unless you have something else in mind!

But I was just saying, among the issues which moved up by more than 30 percent lately were Ayala Land, Globe, PLDT and SM Prime. Good companies all!

Ask any moron in the market: he'll tell you you just buy those issues without looking when the prices go dirt cheap, just because you have so much idle money.

* * *

AND so when the stock market jumps up, just as it did the last time, when it became clear that the Iraq war was ending, you either make the stocks into pickles or sell them for a profit.

If you do the latter the very next day, you can send your girlfriend shopping to Hong Kong. Alone! She is getting to be pretty high-maintenance, that b...h!

Anyway, under their charters, the SSS and the GSIS have to make our money earn by so many percent every year. I wonder if they are even anywhere near the minimum. With the no-brainer T-bills, I will not be surprised if they are even negative.

* * *

YOU see, during the time of Carlos Arellano at the SSS, who handled billions of trust funds in the Far East Bank, the pension fund recorded its highest income EVER.

That was more than P30 billion, mainly from stock investments, even considering the "paper" loss by the time Arellano left.

Now, using hindsight, certain SSS executives are saying that, because of Arellano's adventure into stocks, the fund is carrying billions of "paper" loss.

It's because the stock prices collapsed after Arellano's time. The question is, what did the SSS do in such a downtrend? It did a lot of nothing.

* * *

HINDSIGHT also tells me that, had the SSS and the GSIS stayed active in the market, they could have unloaded some of their holdings before the market turned sour.

But in the stock market, they are even saying that the stock market went bad precisely because the SSS and the GSIS, all of a sudden, just fell into a deep coma.

The two pension funds, based on their investible funds, could maintain something like P100 billion of investments in stocks at any one time—easily.

Just imagine what kind of action those two pension funds could have created in the market! It would have been more frenzied than Jackie Chan's sequence while on amphetamine.

* * *

AND to cover up their own ineptitude, today, certain executives of the pension funds keep harping on the investment in PCI-Equitable Bank.

As you know, during the time of the man named Band ... Wrist Band ... the SSS and the GSIS took part in Equitable Bank's acquisition of PCIBank from the Lopez group.

They bought control of PCIBank at P290 per share. Again, that was the "controlling" stake in one of the biggest banks in the country at that time.

The book value of PCIBank was P160 per share. Some groups shouted, and are still shouting, "overpriced."

Some morons really just cannot tell the difference between premium and overpricing.

* * *

IN every acquisition of a huge block of shares in any bank, you talk of a premium. It is the price you pay above the book value, say, for getting a huge number of shares.

In the case of the PCIBank-Equitable Bank deal, the premium was roughly 50 percent of book value. That was cheap.

In comparison, the Ayala group's BPI bought Far East Bank for a 150-percent premium. The book value of Far East Bank was P20 billion. BPI paid P50 billion for it.

Perhaps, the usually astute JAZA was off that day the Ayala group bought Far East Bank. Or maybe Xavier Loinaz was not his usual brilliant self that day.

So the Ayala group was so stupid, it agreed to a 150-percent "overprice." You know—about two and a half times more stupid than the SSS and the GSIS.

* * *

TODAY, both the SSS and the GSIS are afraid of doing a Chuckie Arellano. They are afraid of investing in the stock market.

They think it is better for our money to earn a little from the T-bills, without any risk, than for it to earn much more, but with a lot of risks.

But that's why we want fund managers to take care of our money. They should know what to do, so the money can earn a lot. They should know, for starters, how to manage their own fear.

* * *

FEAR, I guess, is the evil in business today. For instance, the Bangko Sentral has documents about some hanky-pankies in Banco Filipino.

Yet the Bangko Sentral, I heard, could not do anything against the bank, despite all those documents, for fear of what the bank can do with the help of the courts.

You see, Banco Filipino has won its long-fought case against the defunct Central Bank. Today, nobody in Bangko Sentral dares touch anything to do with the bank again.

Word goes around, too, that BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes was even fined by the courts in connection with the closed Urban Bank case. That kind of fear factor!

The only thing we are not afraid of is the SARS virus.

* * *

AND so now I share with you this letter from a certain Lina Santiago of Makati. She writes:

"It was announced by CNN that Malaysia would not allow entry or grant visas to anyone coming in from China except businessmen who had prior health clearance.

"Why is it that Malaysia can take big bold steps, be it with regards their currency or public health? Will we have more to gain or to lose by allowing tourists from the hot spot itself of SARS to come and invade us? That is what they will actually be doing, since anyone of them could be potential carriers of the virus.

"Will allowing people from China to come in give us such large fortune to offset any outbreak, much more an epidemic within our midst? Will our tourism officials be ready to care for SARS victims themselves, just the simple caregiver's task of feeding, changing and cleaning the patients? Does anybody have any idea on the amount of money that will be needed to cope with an outbreak? Can our politicians start dipping into their pork barrel right now to buy the equipment to prepare the country for a possible outbreak? Why was Joe de Venecia asked by his peers to go for voluntary quarantine if at the same time, tourists were allowed in to mingle with the rest of us?"

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PROMO PERIOD: APRIL 10 TO JUNE 30, 2003 Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0635 Series of 2003

Gov't threatens to withdraw bill on vehicle excise tax

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments yesterday warned that the government would withdraw a bill amending the excise taxes on vehicles if it does not get the green light from the Senate next month.

BOI Managing Head Gregory L. Domingo said another delay in the enactment of the bill would mean that there was "something fundamentally flawed" about the plan to abolish the tax exemptions granted 10-seater vehicles and shift the excise tax base from engine size to value. The House of Representatives approved the bill before Congress went into recess last month while the Senate, where the bill faced rough sailing, agreed to resume deliberations this month.

Domingo said the government would have no choice but to take back the bill and review possible changes before trying its luck again in Congress. In the meantime, assemblers would have to pay the excise taxes under Revenue Regulation 4-2003, which the Bureau of Internal Revenues plans to implement by May 19.

The dreaded RR 4-2003 tightens the implementation of the tax exemption on 10-seater vehicles and will lead to an inevitable price increase of 70 percent on all vehicles sold in the market, including the best-selling Asian utility vehicles.

Domingo said the BOI has decided to push an export subsidy package for exporters of completely built up vehicles in Congress that would give assemblers up to a 50 percent cut in their excise taxes on domestic sales.

Domingo said this was better than giving assemblers a fixed subsidy of between $200 and $400 per unit shipped. He said an excise tax discount would encourage assemblers to export more because it would mean more profits from their domestic sales. "The tax discount favors big local assemblers because they would get potentially bigger incentives from their exports," Domingo said.

The reforms in automotive excise taxes and the export incentive package are part of the President's mandate to reinvigorate the Motor Vehicle Development Program and boost domestic and export sales to between 250,000 and 300,000 units by 2006.

BIR bucks extension of tax perks to BOI-listed firms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue is against the proposed plan of the Board of Investments to grant BOI-registered enterprises another year of income tax exemption.

The BIR said granting the request of power producers, infrastructure builders and service providers to extend their tax break would significantly affect the bureau's revenue collection efforts.

According to lawyer Nelso Aspe, chief of staff of the BIR's deputy commissioner's office, the BIR would not support the move to extend the tax holiday for these firms if ever Congress would seek its comment on the matter.

"It has always been the stance of the BIR to say no to extensions of tax breaks since it directly affects our efforts to improve tax collection," he said in an interview.

Aspe said the BIR understands that tax breaks are essential instruments to improve investments and the business climate as a whole, but that extending such privileges should be carefully studied.

"We understand that revenue collection would also suffer a decline if there would be a less number of businesses that operate in the country. But if asked to give our side on the issue, we would go against the extension of tax privileges of companies who have already enjoyed them," he said.

Aspe said granting exemptions to these business enterprises could be unfair to those who have long been paying taxes to the government and who have not yet enjoyed such privileges.

The BOI plan is aimed at attracting more investments into the country, which has suffered from negative perception of its economic climate and from China's absorption of majority of investments in Asia.

Prepaid Internet users still outnumber postpaid surfers

By Abigail L. Ho

PREPAID Internet users continue to outnumber postpaid subscribers, according to one of the country's pioneer Internet service providers.

"There has been a drastic (shift) to prepaid Internet over the years,'" Mosaic Communications Inc. senior vice president Robertson Chiang said.

Chiang disclosed that MosCom, one of the country's largest ISPs, now had an almost equal mix of postpaid and prepaid subscribers. The company previously catered only to the postpaid market.

On average, MosCom sells around 20,000 to 30,000 prepaid Internet cards a month, according to Chiang.

He explained that the shift was a function of economic and convenience issues.

With a postpaid Internet account, a subscriber will have to show all sorts of documents to be able to open an account. A fixed bill will also have to be settled on a monthly basis.

Prepaid Internet cards, on the other hand, can be bought in almost any store at a user's convenience.

But the proliferation of prepaid Internet cards had made competition in the local ISP arena even tougher, Chiang said.

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By Doris C. Dumlao

CAMACHO

THE COUNTRY is planning to tap the global debt market anew by the second half of this year to meet part of the $900-million funding requirement that the government intends to obtain from commercial sources.

In a teleconference with international investors yesterday, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government would wait until the second semester before braving the debt markets again.

The foremost concern, he said, was to clear the way for the planned debt issue of the state-owned National Power Corp. The power company is raising a total of $1.2 billion this year for its budgetary requirements.

"The national government is staying on the sidelines while the Bangko Sentral is waiting for the right timing," Camacho said.

The government needs to resort to more borrowings to finance its projected budget deficit this year of P202 billion. In the first three months of the year, the government's budget shortfall reached P58.9 billion, exceeded the target ceiling for the period of P55.2 billion. For March, alone, the deficit was placed at P27.2 billion.

In the first quarter, the government's net financing declined by 51 percent to P48.7 billion as the Bureau of Treasury rejected high bid rates for treasury bills and bonds as well as in the net redemption of local treasury bonds.

The government also issued a total of $800 million worth of global bonds and eurobonds in January and February this year.

Local firms still cold on foreign borrowings

THE UNCERTAINTIES brought about by the war in Iraq may have already waned but Philippine companies have yet to regain the appetite to tap the capital markets, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

In an interview, BSP managing director for research Diwa Guinigundo said most local issuers were still wary of the global financial environment even if the risks from the war in Iraq have already gone down substantially. Philippine companies are required to seek approval from the BSP's Monetary Board prior to any foreign borrowing.

"The war is over but it takes time for everybody to settle down," Guinigundo said.

Asked about new applications for foreign borrowings from local firms, he said: "I don't have the numbers but we are still feeling the wait-and-see attitude of local borrowers."

Although solution to the Iraqi crisis appeared to be on the horizon, Guinigundo said a lot of uncertainties remained.

"The issue of reconstruction is always there. What is it going to cost the US economy to finance the reconstruction?" he said. "Does this mean that the US Federal government will incur a higher deficit? What will happen to interest rates?" If US interest rates tightened, the BSP official said it would be inevitable for local interest rates to rise as well.

"If you don't increase local interest rates, there will be capital outflows," Guinigundo said. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Safety. Comfort. Speed.

NORTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY REHAB
Manila North Tollways Corp. president and CEO Jose P. de Jesus points to Economic Planning Secretary Romulo L. Neri the details of the Balintawak-Novaliches flyover project on a replica billboard during recent groundbreaking rites that launched construction works for the North Luzon Tollway Project. Ten larger billboards featuring various improvements that form part of the rehabilitation, expansion and upgrading of North Luzon Expressway have been installed in strategic points from Balintawak, Metro Manila to Angeles, Pampanga.

Court urged to lift TRO on use of Maynilad bond

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System has asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to lift the restraining order preventing the water agency from tapping the $230-million performance bond posted by Maynilad Water Services Inc.

MWSS Administrator Orlando Hondrade yesterday said the agency had filed a motion to lift the TRO before RTC Branch 218 on April 10.

The MWSS wants to use the performance bond to pay maturing loans. Hondrade said the MWSS was running short of funds to service its loans as Maynilad refused to settle its obligations with the government. The Lopez-led consortium filed a notice of early termination of its concession before an arbitration panel and, therefore, talks on the settlement of its obligations with the government had to be postponed.

MWSS acting finance department chief Estrellito Polloso said in another interview that MWSS would need P10 billion in borrowings to settle Maynilad's concession fee obligations.

Polloso said that of the amount, P3.3 billion would be used to pay maturing obligations with multilateral lenders including the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank while P6.7 billion would be used to settle bridge loans acquired last year from Deutsche Bank, Keppel Monte Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines and Philippine National Bank.

The MWSS said it would request the national government, through the Department of Finance, to back the planned borrowing.

Sources said Maynilad had stopped paying its concession fees since March 2001 and, later, sought the early termination of its concession due to cash flow problems and the alleged lack of support from MWSS in making the concession financially viable.

Maynilad's termination notice is now being evaluated by an arbitration panel led by a representative from the International Chamber of Commerce.

DISCLOSURES

PRIMETOWN Property Group Inc. disclosed it did not hold its annual stockholders' meeting last April 19 due to its failure to send notices to stockholders.

* * *

MACONDRAY Plastics Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 10 a.m. at its principal office in Davao City. Stockholders of record as of April 30 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

KEPPEL Philippines Properties Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 10. Record date is May 9.

* * *

DIGITAL Telecommunications Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 26, 10 a.m. at the Amorsolo Ballroom of Manila Galleria Suites. Record date was moved from March 15 to March 31.

* * *

CROWN Equities Inc. disclosed the appointment of Eugene Macalalag as compliance officer and company vice president.

* * *

JG Summit Holdings Inc. denied reports it would get JPMorgan and Morgan Stanley to sell the company's dollar denominated bonds. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Stocks end sharply down

From page B1

cent since the start of April and 6.43 percent higher so far this year.

"It's simply profit-taking from the gains we had before the Holy Week (the Easter holidays)," said Oliver Plana, head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc. "The market will probably be going back to a sideways mode of trading for the rest of the week."

"There's a knee-jerk reaction to the budget deficit and there have been worries about SARS since yesterday," said Elena Ponceca of Unicapital Securities.

"(Some of) the regional markets have been weighed down by the SARS outbreak and I think the Philippines is bound to be affected also," said Andrew Long of ATR Kim Eng Securities.

Turnover climbed to P243.56 million from P201.4 million on Tuesday. Losers outpaced gainers by almost four to one.

Jose Vistan, an economic analyst at AB Capital Securities, said a higher-than-targeted budget deficit in the first quarter raised some concerns that the country's sovereign ratings might be downgraded.

The government said on Tuesday its budget deficit hit P58.9 billion in January to March, higher than the target of P55.2 billion.

But some analysts said the bigger shortfall was not a surprise after the government had hinted about an overshoot due to front-loading of some expenditures.

Despite the fears about a possible sovereign downgrade, the debt market largely ignored the first-quarter deficit numbers as yields eased slightly.

Dominant phone firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) led the losers, falling P5 to P390. It accounted for about a quarter of the total turnover.

PLDT rival Digital Telecommunications Inc. slid two centavos to 72 centavos, extending its losses to a second day. But the stock is still up 38 percent since the start of the month on speculation about its recent entry into the competitive mobile phone business.

Conglomerate Ayala Corp., a favorite of foreign investors, lost 30 centavos to P4.05.

In the top 10 list of active stocks, only construction firm EEI Corp. managed to gain on local media reports it is bidding for a contract to rebuild Iraq's utility services and repair major infrastructure after the war. EEI rose 5.26 percent or three centavos to 60 centavos. *Reuters, AFP*

Japanese firms back moratorium on labor strikes

From page B1

Japanese businessmen because they did not know whether to look for the quick response team or quick reaction team which were manned by separate personnel. "If you want to advocate something, you have to be more specific," Kawaguchi said.

Just like the FFCCCI, which has committed to create at least three million jobs with a strike moratorium, Kawaguchi said most Japanese businessmen would invest more in the country, which has been a significant recipient of Japanese foreign aid.

Aside from labor unrest, Kawaguchi said Japanese businessmen were also concerned about the country's poor infrastructure, lack of peace and order, absence of international hazardous waste policy, and delays in the refund of the value-added tax. He said the government should act fast and decisively because investor would not wait and they might just go to other Asean countries or China for their overseas expansion.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, April 23, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
DANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16	16	15.5	15.5	44,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	37	37	35.5	36	768,600
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26.5	26.5	25	25	96,900
First E-Bank Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.56	40,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	50,000
Philippine National Bank	26	26	25	25	11,300
Security Bank Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	29,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	17	17	17	17	5,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	90,000
First Abacus Financial	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	30,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	25,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1360	1370	1360	1370	300
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1040	1050	1040	1050	2,450
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.5	14.5	13.75	13.75	24,300
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.74	0.76	0.69	0.72	11,500,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	590	590	560	560	5,030
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.034	9,100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	1,100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	1,220,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	395	395	382.5	390	153,760
Ivantage Corp.	0.43	0 43	0.43	0.43	60,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.012	0.013	33,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	7.5	7.5	7.1	7.2	165,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11	11	9.9	10	1,963,800
Petron Corp.	2 04	2 04	1.92	1.96	6,336,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.46	1.48	570,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2 7	2.7	2.6	2.6	507,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.63	0.66	0.59	0.6	13,930,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.75	0 75	0 75	0.75	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.42	2.42	2.38	2.4	298,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.25	16.25	16	16	34,000
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.76	640,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	28,600
San Miguel Corp. B	67	67	66.5	67	13,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0 3	0.3	0.3	110,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.05	4.05	9,466,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2 42	2.42	2.4	2.4	83,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.032	0.028	0.029	29,300,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	425,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.235	0.25	0.23	0.23	2,410,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.3	0.26	0.26	10,190,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8.2	8.2	8	8	186,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	200,000
Ionics Inc.	0.74	0.76	0.71	0.76	390,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.54	1.54	631,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	190,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.61	1,200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	4,250,000
Music Corp.	0.37	0.38	0.35	0.35	3,050,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.09	0.095	0.09	0.095	400,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0 39	0 43	0 38	0.38	3,020,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	100,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	210,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.16	326,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	3,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.32	1.5	1.22	1.5	4,880,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	500,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	32	32	32	32	500
Pryce Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	900,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16 75	16 75	16 75	16.75	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0 43	0 43	0.41	0.42	4,100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	150,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.39	450,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0 15	0 15	0 15	0.15	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	14.5	14 5	13.5	13.5	53,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	5,000,000
WGA - Preferred	3.05	3 8	3.05	3.8	110,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.2	5.2	5	5.1	1,582,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.18	200,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.21	0.215	0.2	0.2	1,710,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.18	9,010,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	30,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0 98	0 98	0 94	0.95	4,280,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.0525	0.0525	0.046	0.046	2,100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	1,470,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	5,000
SM Development Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	121,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5	5 1	5	5	1,109,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0 19	0.19	0.19	1,450,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	2,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	10,000,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.045	0 045	0.045	0.045	300,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0 003	0.003	0.003	8,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0 003	0.003	0.003	3,000,000
Pacifica	0.0095	0 0095	0.0095	0.0095	5,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,196 250	36,515,475.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	163,463,990	186,138,150.00
PRO	21,617,000	20,273,590.00
Mining	13,950,000	380,600.00
OIL	16,000,000	80,500.00
GRAND TOTALS :	216 227 240	243,388,315.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	367 62	DOWN 10 60
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,582 95	DOWN 45.83
PRO	457 03	DOWN 13 61
Mining	1,168.50	UNCH 0.00
OIL	1.29	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	682 91	UP 0.18
Composite	1,083.88	DOWN 33.24

NO OF ADVANCES: 13; NO. OF DECLINES: 50; NO OF UNCHANGED: 27; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 90; NO. OF TRADES: 2,454

CURRENCIES

April 23, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.911494	1.000000	52.477000
Japan	Yen	0.007599	0.008337	0.437500
United Kingdom	Pound	1.438246	1.577900	82.803500
Hongkong	Dollar	0.116869	0.128217	6.728400
Switzerland	Franc	0.664887	0.729448	38.279200
Canada	Dollar	0.629920	0.691085	36.266100
Singapore	Dollar	0.512796	0.562588	29.522900
Australia	Dollar	0.565759	0.620694	32.572200
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.417948	2.652731	139.207400
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.243072	0.266674	13.994300
Brunei	Dollar	0.511357	0.561010	29.440100
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000114	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.021352	0.023425	1.229300
UAE	Dirham	0.248181	0.272279	14.288400
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.097100	57.572500
Argentina	Peso	0.317594	0.348432	18.284700
Brazil	Real	0.298459	0.327439	17.183000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134725	0.147807	7.756500
India	Rupee	0.019295	0.021169	1.110900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.239899	0.263193	13.811600
Mexico	New Peso	0.086308	0.094688	4.968900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.510812	0.560412	29.408700
Norway	Kroner	0.127462	0.139839	7.338300
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015811	0.017346	0.910300
South Africa	Rand	0.121046	0.132800	6.968900
Korea	Won	0.000745	0.000817	0.042900
Sweden	Kroner	0.109598	0.120240	6.309800
Syria	Pound	0.021703	0.023810	1.249500
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026260	0.028810	1.511900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000572	0.000627	0.032900

INTEREST RATES

April 23, 2003—MART 1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 April 23, 2003 (%)	MART1 April 22, 2003 (%)
1 Month	8.1212	8.1923
3 Months	8.3288	8.3981
6 Months	8.9404	8.9229
1 Year	9.6615	9.6519
2 Years	10.6596	10.7462
3 Years	11.6058	11.7212
4 Years	12.3981	12.7019
5 Years	12.6769	12.9327
7 Years	13.1442	13.3577
10 Years	13.5038	13.6019
20 Years	13.9577	13.9404
25 Years	14.4000	14.4000

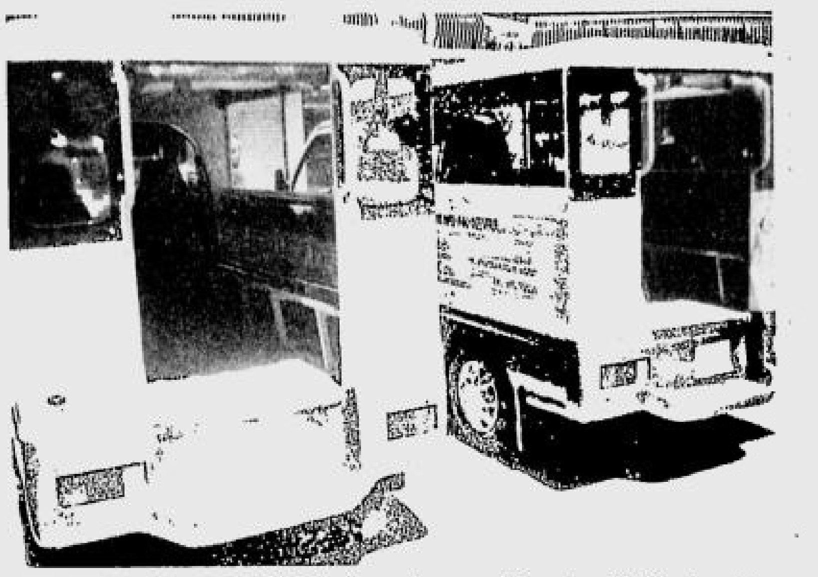
SOURCE : MART/BLOOMBERG

E-mail: pr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph
MOTORING
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

New option to community transport system

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

MULTICABS now grace the transport landscape of Cavite's Molino to Bacoor (vice versa) routes.



MEMBERS of the BGMMTC believe the new 14-seater Multicabs will provide an affordable and much better accommodation for their commuters.

WHEN a transport cooperative in Cavite decided to acquire additional units, they did not hesitate to try on a different type of vehicle that they believe is more income-generating than tricycles but more environment-friendly than jeepneys.

The Barangay Gawaran (Molino 7) Multipurpose Transport Cooperative believe they did right in getting the 14-seater Multicabs.

The initial 16 units acquired were warmly welcomed by their commuters as they now pay the minimum P4 or up to P12 if they ride straight from Gawaran to SM Shoemart in Bacoor, Cavite (compared to a tricycle ride that costs between P30 and P40).

"It's great relief for our commuters' pockets and much more they find the Multicabs perfect as it is not as noisy as the tricycles yet compact enough to easily negotiate the narrow streets of Molino," describes Melchor Lapasanda, the co-op chair.

New class of vehicle

Multicabs are new class of vehicles invented in 1990 by Norkis Group of Companies—much smaller than jeepneys and run on a Daihatsu 660-cc gasoline engine imported from Japan.

They're widely used in the provinces where they are fast replacing jeepneys and tricycles because of their affordability, functionality and less cost on maintenance.

Multicabs are slowly creeping in here, in Metro Manila and outlying areas, as they are now being used as an alternative transport mode in villages and communities.

In Metro Manila, Multicabs ply the routes of villages and subdivisions inside BF Homes in Parañaque City.

Enticing co-ops, communities

"We have been enticing transport cooperatives and associations to consider Multicabs especially now that they can get one without shelling out too much money," according to Antonio Medina, chair of Bantay Transportasyon Foundation, an advocacy group concerned with the welfare of the riding public.

Medina's group is actively supporting a Department of Transportation and Communications program to attract tricycle co-ops and associations to upgrade their fleets to Multicabs under the DOTC vehicle acquisition program Sagip sa Pangkabuhayan (Sakay) project.

Sagip project is designed to provide transport cooperatives additional fund to finance viable enterprises in the small and medium range.

30 more

The BGMMTC is now in the process of getting more Multicabs—30 to be exact—through funding that it is negotiating with Cavite Rep. Plaridel Abaya.

"This is the first time in eight years that we considered an offer like this. In this hard times, we had to study our projects whether they really generate more jobs and income for our members," says Lapasanda.

The initial 16 units were previously acquired through the Eagle Financial Services Group Inc., the financing arm of the Norkis Group of Companies, which allowed the co-op to buy the units at a promotional price of P150,000 at P31,000 down payment.

"Hopefully, we can set a precedent for other cooperatives. We are getting a lot of support not only from our members and communities but from various commercial establishments," says BGMMTC vice chair Philip Valdemoro.

More franchises

"We cannot accomplish this deal wit out the support of DOTC Undersecreta Art Valdez and LTFRB (Land Transport tion Franchising and Regulatory Boar chair Dante Lantin who fast-tracked t Multicab franchises for the co-op," sa Medina.

Medina believes more franchis should be opened for Multicabs. "Mult cabs can easily pass the tests to comp with the Clean Air Act, sit passenge more comfortably than tricycles, an don't crowd the streets," he states.

Says Medina: "I believe the Multica fit Metro Manila's transport needs. It's good investment for tricycle operators they plan on replacing or upgrading the aging fleet."

WINNING CAR

Actress Patricia Javier poses beside the 2003 Concept One/A-Toy Civic which bagged numerous awards in the recently concluded Transport Show at the SM Megamall. With its eye-catching paint job, A-Toy original design body kits and 18-inch Concept One Racing Hart magwheels wrapped in Falken Tires, the 2003 Civic won Best in Show—reserve, Best Body Kit and first place in the Japanese Modified 2 category. The car was sponsored by Honda Cars Philippines Inc., Concept One magwheels, A-Toy Body kits, Koni shock absorbers, H&R lowering springs, K&N air filters and Falken Tires.

Honda unveils 2003 IRL IndyCar lineup

THE WINNINGEST active American open wheel racer, a former IRL and Indy 500 race champion, a pair of proven race winners and a promising series rookie make up the lineup as American Honda Motor Co. Inc. enters Indy Racing League IndyCar Series for 2003.

With 42 CART race victories in a career dating back to 1983, Michael Andretti comes to the IRL in the dual role of both team owner and driver, after assuming primary ownership of the former Team Green organization at the end of 2002. Now, as head of Andretti Green Racing, the 1991 CART champion will lead a three-car entry of Honda-powered Dallaras in the IndyCar competition.

Andretti's teammates include Dario Franchitti, who won last season on the oval at Rockingham Motor Speedway in England for the latest of his 10 career CART victories. Franchitti, who started with the former Team Green organization in 1998, also won in Montreal and Vancouver last year. He was CART championship runner-up to Juan Pablo Montoya in the closest finish in series history—decided by a tie-breaker after the pair tied on series points.

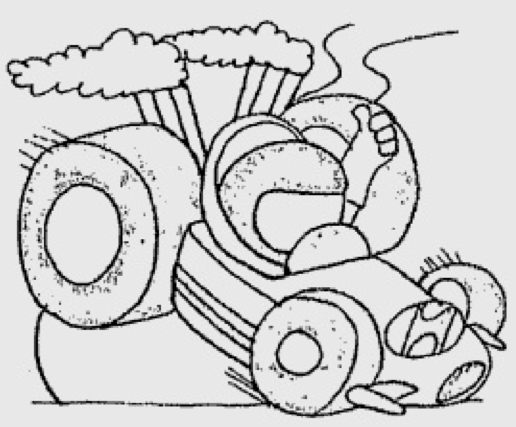


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

The full-time Andretti-Green racing line is completed by Brazilian Tony Kanaan, w pins Andretti Green from Mo Nunn Raci and will be seeking a repeat of his 1999 vict ry at Michigan International Speedway whe the IRL returns there in July. Briton D Wheldon, who made his IRL debut in 20 with Panther Racing, will see testing and d velopment duties with Andretti Green, wi the possibility of racing for the team later th season.

Team Rahal rejoins the Honda-power fold in 2003, with 1998 IRL champion a 1999 Indianapolis 500 winner Kenny Brack the wheel of the team's Honda-powered Pi neer/Miller Lite Dallara. The Columbu Ohio-based team previously was associat with Honda during the company's inaugu CART racing season in 1994.

Brack also is returning to Team Rahal aft

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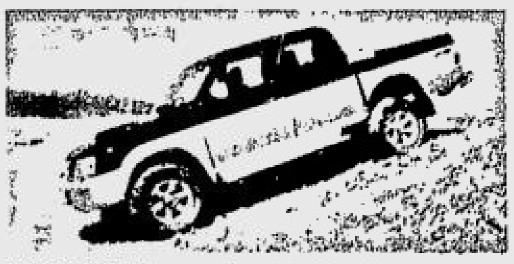
NO squeaks and groans were noticed on this brute as it climbed.



WITH ALL the muscles, the Strada was incredibly gentle on the slope.

THERE'S no hammering of the pistons. The body was soundly put together.

This brawny brute treads gently

By Tessa R. Salazar

IT'S love at first sight of the 2003 Strada. There's oozing sex appeal, no doubt. The equipment exudes machismo to the max, with sports tires as big as the brawny Pajero's (16-inch AT tires), more aggressive chrome grille and front bumper, and a time-tested 4D56 engine—a production-type engine (since the '80s) that a lot of mechanics know by heart.

But with all this muscle, the Strada was incredibly gentle, as was my experience with a 4x4 Strada 4-speed AT with 4WD and synchronizer (for shifting on the fly).

What I like about the Strada's ATs (take note loyal MT lovers) is its close-ratio transmission. I could hear from the sound of the engine, and see via the RPM gauge, the minimal shifts in gear. What this means is that the Strada doesn't "overload" the engine because of the correct ratio. Measuring the "freefalls" in the RPM to around 200 to 250 between first and second gear, the difference with other ATs becomes pronounced (other AT vehicles drop RPMs by as high as 500).

Gentle and quiet, the Strada is. Considering this is still a diesel engine, I didn't hear the hammering of the pistons. The body was soundly put together, even. There were no squeaks and groans from this brute. Part of the reason for this quietness, perhaps, was the interior insulation, which could be better than the luxury car I recently drove. This is not to mention the all-terrain tires attached to it.

Admittedly, the Strada gave a softer ride compared to my benchmark Nissan Frontier (which has firmer ride).

Inside the engine

The Strada has well-placed insulating foam to ensure all air is drawn in through the radiator, through the fins that gather air from the outside and not recycled from the engine. This type of air circulation ensures the proper heat exchange from the engine to the circulating air. Thus, the Strada's nose, which looks cool and aggressive, also serves a function to scoop in air and guide it through the intercooler engine.

The downside of this is that the fins can be easily damaged or deformed, and I did notice in my test unit that some of the fins in the turbo intercooler were already bent at the sides. Attention, manufacturers. Sturdier fins are needed here.

In terms of parts accessibility, the Strada has no problem. But maintenance checks will require some bodily contortions. Components inside the engine compartment are quite difficult to access.

An eye for details

The seating configurations were comfortable, considering my small frame. The 4-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheels, with a thumb rest at that, allowed for a nice grip.

There's even a tire pressure gauge, using a probe through the rim. What a thoughtful detail! Mitsubishi calls this, quite simply, its tire pressure monitoring system. The tire pressure stickers on the door, meanwhile, suggest 26 psi for the front tires and 29 for back tires.

A supplied inclinator meter was quite useful, too, though there were still some kinks in the way it measured our inclines (The meter couldn't decide if we were angled 25 or 30 degrees in a particular slope).

Mitsubishi showered Strada passengers this time with cupholders (front and sides). The three-meter combination cluster on the dashboard (incline, fuel and temperature) exudes a hip look. The utility box (available only with the AT) at the pickup bed is a nice touch, though it was not firmly attached (When lifting the top cover, the whole utility box kept coming up). Mitsubishi has given out its assurances that this doesn't happen to its other units.

The Strada's front suspension sports a wishbone-torsion bar and elliptical leafspring at the back, but there's no traction bar, traction rods, or sway bars. Perhaps because these are optional, used only when you go off-roading. Traction bars basically prevent the rear differential from steering itself as you bank on corners. Nevertheless, traction bars are means of gaining control over any maneuver, and not just when cutting corners.

The Strada could be my new benchmark for a pickup, except for the brakes. We were spoiled by the Load Sensing Valve (LSV) of the Frontier (mechanical equivalent of the Anti Lock Brake system), because the LSV really does its job and you feel it doing its duty.

The 2003 Mitsubishi Strada 4x4 AT with part-time 4-wheel drive goes for P1.050 million. The Strada MT is priced at P1.010 million.

Fuel consumption—Using the Department of Energy's standard testing procedure with attached apparatus between fuel line, the Mitsubishi technical staff drove 160 km around Calatagan, Batangas, with an average speed of 70 km/hr and with a shifting point of 2,200 rpm, the Strada AT 9.6 km/liter and Strada MT 11.5 km/liter.

Verdict—It's a toss-up between the Frontier and the Strada. No matter how the coin lands, you'll have your hands full with these handsome, gentle giants.

Hyundai eyes higher sales, better image

THE SOUTH Korean car company Hyundai has become a big seller in the United States and plans to get a lot bigger.

Hyundai has had to deal with a public image of low quality cars. It's done it by improving quality and promoting its Hyundai Advantage warranty, at 10 years the longest in the business. The senior analyst for the marketing and research firm, Auto Pacific Inc., Jim Hossack, says they're succeeding.

"They appear to be on the right track. Every indication we have is that the vehicles are, in fact, better," he says. "And, better vehicles ultimately result in better image and better reputation."

Impressive sales growth

Hyundai's rapid sales growth is impressive, but Robert Cosmai, vice president for national sales in the US, says the past is merely prologue.

"Our short-term sales goal is, by the end of 2005, to be selling a half-a-million vehicles (a year) in the United States," he explains. "I don't know if you know it or not, but the only importers that sell more cars than we do are Honda, Toyota and Nissan. We moved ahead of Volkswagen last year, Mitsubishi and Mazda. So we feel it's within our goal and we're trying to sell over 400,000 this year."

An important factor in Hyundai's aggressive growth in the United States is the decision to build an assembly plant near Montgomery, Alabama, a billion-dollar investment that will bring 2,000 jobs with it when production begins in 2005. Robert Cosmai says the Alabama facility represents his company's commitment to this market.

"I think any major importer now that distributes products, especially in the US, should be building a good percentage of their cars where they sell them," he says. "All the other manufacturers, the Toyotas and the Hondas, have done so and I think it makes us a little bit larger and it's perceived more as a mainstream product. But it's very important that we have a (manufacturing) presence here."

5 years from now

"We're hoping our brand continues to strengthen and be perceived as any of the mainstream players, like Toyota and Honda," says Cosmai. " We look at them as the benchmarks on the import side of the business.

"We would like to strengthen our perception in the marketplace that buying a Hyundai product will continue to be a great value. But also that we've got some of the newest and most innovative products in the marketplace."

Five years ago, Hyundai, if it was noticed at all, received little serious attention from the American auto industry. As the company accelerates toward the half-million annual sales mark, it's not being ignored anymore.

Hyundai vehicles are being distributed in the Philippines by Hyundai Asia Resources Inc.

GM expects S. Korea subsidiary to achieve strong sales growth

US Auto giant General Motors Corp. said Monday its subsidiary in South Korea would achieve strong sales growth this year, helped by fast expanding overseas demand.

"We expect exports sales will double in 2003," GM Daewoo Auto and Technology's president Nick Reilly said.

GM Daewoo "has gotten off to a very good start" since it officially took over South Korea's bankrupt Daewoo Motor Co. in October last year, he said.

Reilly said GM Daewoo sold 37,162 vehicles in March this year, double the number sold in September, with domestic sales surging 51 percent and overseas sales 165 percent.

"We are (performing) better than expected. We are ahead of plan, financially," he said. *AFP*

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CLEAN AIR ACT COMPLIANT
Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Ambassador Wang Chungui of the People's Republic of China (foreground) discuss the environment-friendly features of the all-new 4-stroke Jianshe motorcycles assembled in the Philippines by Jianshe Motorcycle Industries Philippines Corp. Jianshe assembles and markets motorcycles that comply with the smoke emission standards of the Clean Air Act. The occasion was the inauguration of the company's second assembly plant in the Laguna International Industrial Park, Biñan, Laguna. Also shown are Jianshe Philippines president Jimmy Ong, assistant to the president Ko Beng Sum and Mayor Cheng Yigi (far right) of Chongqing City, China.

AUTO EXTREME AUTO BYTES

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Each week, a viewer's question related to cars and motoring gets answered on Auto Extreme. You can get a hard copy every Thursday in the Motoring section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

IS it necessary or correct to rev the engine before turning it off? —John Paul Seguerra from Cagayan De Oro City

No, it is neither necessary nor correct. When you rev the engine you introduce a fresh charge of gasoline and air into the engine. When the motor stops, you end up dumping raw fuel on the cylinder walls and rings, washing away the lubricating oil. When you next start the car, you contribute to engine wear because there is no oil protection so the piston rings wear heavily on the cylinder walls.

On top of that, you waste gasoline because you're shooting raw gas through the system which will not be burnt. So when it's time to stop, just stop. Take your foot off the gas completely for at least a few seconds before turning off the key.

And while we're on the subject of revving engines, it is also not a good idea to rev your engine when you start it. Fifty percent of all engine wear occurs in the first few seconds after you start the car. By accelerating before the oil reaches the top of the engine cylinders, you speed up engine wear and can do a considerable amount of damage. Instead of idling for several minutes or revving your engine on a cold start, just drive gently for the first kilometer or two, or for about five minutes. Believe it or not, it takes more time to warm up the engine when it's sitting idle. So to get your car warmed up right, just start the engine and drive.

Honda unveils 2003 IRL. . .

From page B5

two successful seasons. In 2000, the Swede was CART Rookie of the Year, and he went on to win four times and lead the championship for much of the season before finishing second in the final standings.

Fernandez Racing, now teamed with former Formula One racer Aguri Suzuki, will field Atlantic Championship oval race winner Roger Yasukawa's Panasonic/Arta Dallara with Honda power under the Super Aguri Fernandez Racing banner in the 2003 IRL IndyCar Series.

Last year, Yasukawa won in just his second Atlantic start at the historic Milwaukee Mile oval and finished second at the only other Atlantic oval race, at Chicago Motor Speedway. Of Japanese heritage, but born in California where he lives today, Yasukawa finished 10th in the Atlantic championship despite missing three rounds of the 12-race series.

Honda's racing subsidiary, Honda Performance Development Inc. of Santa Clarita, California, will lead the company's effort in the IRL IndyCar Series, in partnership with Ilmor Engineering Inc., of Plymouth, Michigan. HPD and Ilmor will work together as technical partners to design, develop and produce engines for the 2003 season. HPD and Ilmor also will provide backside support and engine rebuilding services to teams using the newly developed Honda H13R Indy V-8 engine.

This is an exciting new chapter in Honda's racing history, giving Honda the opportunity to compete in the challenging IRL series and the famous Indianapolis 500 race, while at the same time expanding HPD's abilities as a true racing engine development company, said Robert Clarke, general manager of HPD. Competing in the IRL series, with its rules to intentionally limit the use of high-cost technology and thus provide more parity in the racing field, will give Honda a new competitive experience and the fans more exciting racing.

A lion's racing pedigree

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

"UN peu" in French means "a little," but when it comes to Peugeot, the word means anything but little. Peugeot is a lion, both in the automobile industry and in international motor sports. The founding Peugeot family's forefathers must have been inspired in 1858 when they registered the company's trademark as a lion striding along an arrow to symbolize the durability, suppleness and quickness of steel, like the lion itself.

Today, Automobiles Peugeot is part of the PSA Group, the sixth largest car maker in the world with sales of more than 3.2 million vehicles in 2002. Car buffs are anticipating Peugeot's arrival in Manila this June since the first car that Peugeot distributor AutoFrance Philippines Inc. will bring in is the standard version of the World Rally Championship-winning Peugeot 206.

The Peugeot 206 World Rally Car was first shown to the public in 1998 alongside the Peugeot 206 standard production car. In the four years since its launch, over three million units of the 206 have been sold. In 2002, it was Europe's best-selling car.

World Rally champion

The success of the 206 may be traced to the 206 World Rally Car's victories three years in a row (2000, 2001 and 2002) in the World Rally Championship (WRC), which consists of 14 racing events on asphalt, gravel and snow in as many countries from January to November. The latest WRC news is that two Peugeot 206 WRC Evo 3 entries swept first and second place in the Rally New Zealand (April 11-13), boosting Peugeot's lead to 49 points. Citroen is second with 44 and Ford is third with 26 points. (Citroen, by the way, is a sister company in the PSA Group, 90 percent of its equity having been acquired by Peugeot in 1976 when it was cash-strapped.)

But the WRC is not the only recurring title in the lion's racing pedigree. The history of Peugeot is replete with triumphs in motor sports. In 1912, Peugeot produced its first Grand Prix car powered by an engine that was technologically advanced for its time, using a hemispherical combustion chamber with cross-flow head and 4 valves per cylinder driven by twin overhead camshafts. The 16-valve, DOHC Peugeot won the Grand Prix for French Automobiles and a year later, placed first in the Indianapolis American Grand Prix. A reinforced variant broke the world speed record in 1913 by clocking 170.558 km per hour.

In 1931, a Peugeot 201 won the Monte Carlo Rally and in 1938, a Peugeot 402 finished No. 1 in the 24 Hours of Le Mans race. After World War II forced Peugeot to stay inactive for some years, the car maker trumpeted its return to motor sports in 1961 by winning the East African Safari Rally with its new 404 model. Another rally winner, the 504, came out in 1968, elevating Peugeot's sales as France's second best-selling car.

Headlines again

After a quiet interlude lasting about a decade, Peugeot made industry headlines again in 1983 when it launched the 205 hatchback on the market with great success. What's more, the 205's racing version, the 205 Turbo 16, captured the world rally championship in 1985 and the Paris-Dakar endurance rally in 1987. Aside from these victories and the WRC manufacturer titles, Peugeot has also won at Pikes' Peak.

Peugeot is the only major car company other than Ford that is still run by members of the founding family. In Europe, the PSA Group to which Peugeot belongs outsells all but the Volkswagen Group and in the United Kingdom, it is the No. 2 manufacturer, second to Ford. Although it remains largely centered in Western Europe and has no immediate plans to re-enter the lucrative United States market, Peugeot claims that its sales in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, Iran and Japan rose by 21 percent last year. Peugeot is returning to the Philippines after an absence of 40 years as part of its Asean marketing strategy, but its regional base will be in Malaysia.

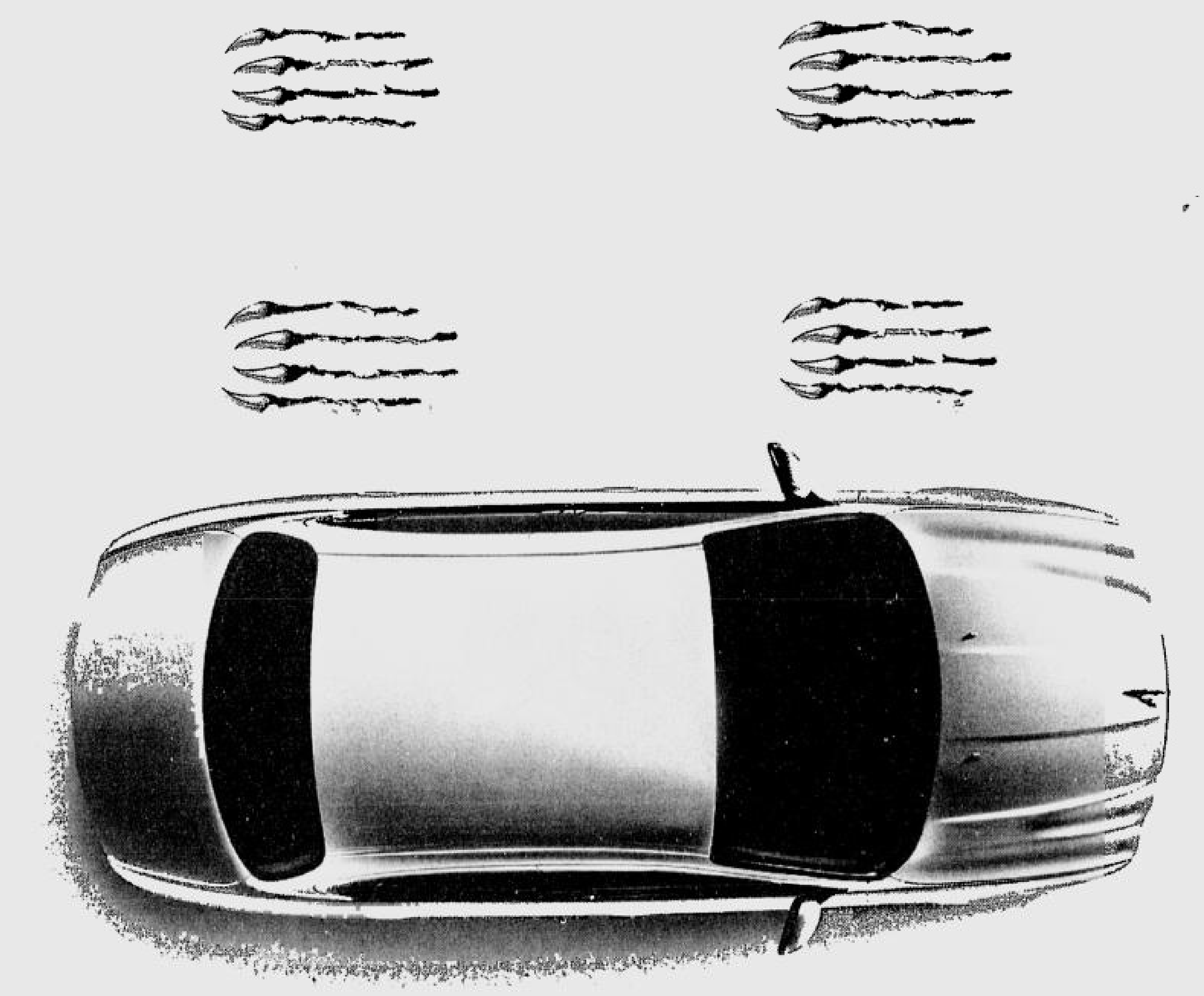
The Peugeot 206 to be sold here will be a 1.6-liter hatchback, not the turbo-charged, 4-wheel-drive rally car that has become a world motor sports champion. Nonetheless, because of Peugeot's racing pedigree and platform-sharing program, the 206 is expected to be a high-performance but reasonably priced subcompact.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Those who jump off a Paris bridge are in Seine.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.



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THE "Best of Show" winner: the 1967 Toyota Corona Toyopet entry of Xtreme Auto Center

Trans Sport Show 2003 major winners known

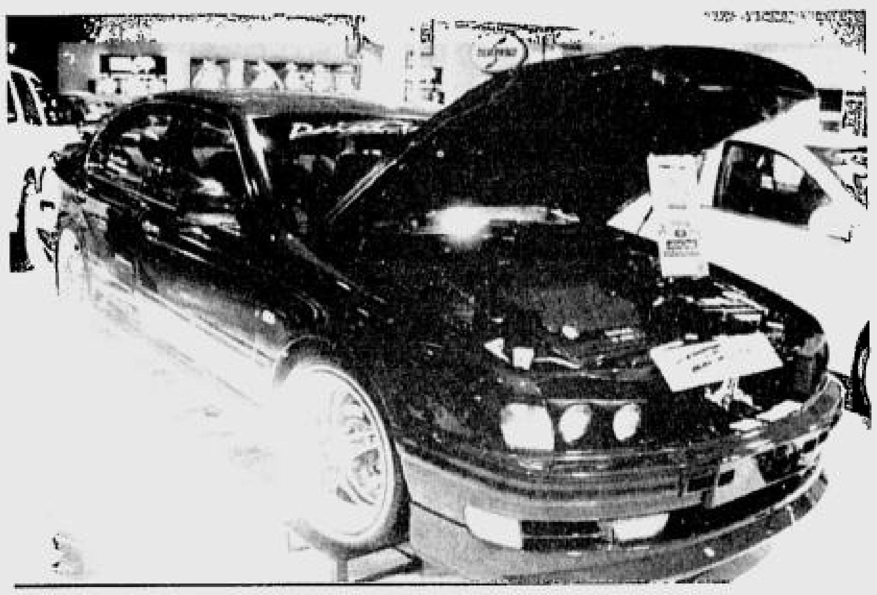
THE RECENTLY concluded Trans Sport Show 2003 was again a resounding success, despite the bearish economy, the conflict in Iraq and the SARS epidemic. The country's biggest motoring event brought together all the local car enthusiasts to witness the latest in the local motoring scene.

The hotly contested Trans Sport Show Cup open class car competition was hotly contested in several categories requiring last minute deliberations by the show judges to determine the eventual winners.

For the highly coveted "Best of Show" award, the rare of 1967 Toyota Corona Toyopet entry of Xtreme Auto Center was declared the winner. Painted in frost silver with beautiful matching maroon interior, the car is in better than "showroom" condition. The Corona was also judged the "Best Interior" and also first in the "Vintage Stock" category, besting the 1968 Mercedes-Benz 28OSL entry of Route 66.

Another surprise winner is the much modified 2002 Honda Civic of A-Toy Custom Paint which won the tough Japanese Modified 2 category in a closely contested match against the 2001 Honda Civic entry of Auto Exclusive Paint & Body Works. The car of A-Toy was also voted as the 1st runner-up for the "Best of Show" award and the top placer in the "Best Body Kit" category.

The "Best in Paint" category was won by the 1989 Mercedes Benz 26OE Lorinzer entry of DC Autosport for the Euro-American Division and the 1996 Honda SIR of Allen Isidro/Racing Zone won the Japanese Division. Best Engine Display was garnered by the 2001 Honda Civic of Reibet Autoshape. The "Best Audio Setup" went to the 1994 Honda Civic of Vicente Peña.



THE 1997 Nissan Cefiro entry of Paint Tricks Auto Body won the "Best Japanese Luxury Sedan" category.

THE 1955 Chevy Bel Air entry of Boy de Leon was the winner of the "Best Historic Sedan."

This year's Ms Trans Sport Show winner is Michelle Moreno representing the company of Westfield Megabird owned by car racer Trevor Briggs. Moreno bested 11 other contestants who are all representatives of other exhibitor companies.

On the exhibitor's side, Mancor Industries won the "Most Out-standing Corporate Display" award. The company exhibited a typical Motor Vehicle Inspection System (MVIS) from Germany which the Mancor will set up soon in line with the government's implementation of a stringent MVIS starting next year.

When heart becomes rock; new LRT pitch

FULL TANK

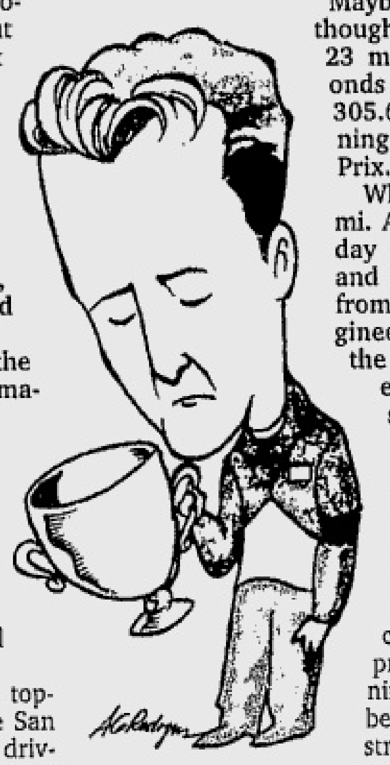
Al Mendoza

IT was not just the day the music died. For the Schumacher brothers (Michael and Ralf), it was more than that: It was the day their mother died.

I raise a glass to them for their courage to go for the near-impossible amid adversity. To humanity, a mother's death is the mother of all grief.

It was not so much that Michael Schumacher finally snapped his losing streak last Sunday in the Formula One season. His victory in the San Marino Grand Prix in Imola, Italy, spoke volumes about how not to lose when defeat looked as inevitable as death.

* * *



How can one score a victory when one's world was supposed to be enveloped in darkness? God's eyes were Schumacher's eyes that day?

Just hours before his win, Schumacher's mother had died.

Mother's hand was behind the steering wheel of her son's machine that day?

* * *

The greatest Formula One driver for years now was with his mother just a day before the victory.

Seemingly, Schumi has made traveling a breeze, making the world a virtual plaything.

On Saturday, minutes after topping the qualifying run in the San Marino Grand Prix, the Ferrari driver flew with his brother Ralf to Cologne, Germany, for a brief, final visit to their ailing 55-year-old mother. By nightfall, the brothers were back in Italy, ready to do battle the next day.

* * *

Talk about willpower, or a heart as hard as a rock. I say not many Filipinos are known for that.

When the Schumacher brothers learned of their mother's death last Sunday morning, the day of the race, they closed their eyes, paused a while and said a prayer. And then, without any hint of hesitation, they boarded their machines for the San Marino Grand Prix.

In a little more than an hour later, Michael Schumacher, 32, was the winner. Like his brother Ralf, Michael won a more meaning battle than the one achieved at the racetrack: The battle raging in their minds—mother's death.

* * *

To be sure, there was drama other than the gnawing thought about how the Schumachers would survive the ordeal.

Starting from the grid first, Michael was overtaken by Ralf on the race's first turn. If you think that that was for show, think again, fellas.

After 16 of the 62 laps scheduled for the day, Ralf had to make a pit stop and surrendered the lead to his elder brother. The defending world champion led most of the way thereafter en route to pocketing his first victory for the season. Ralf finished fourth in a Williams.

* * *

In a statement after his victory, Michael said: "My mother loved to be at the track. She loved it when we drove go-karts on the old track at home. She would have wanted to see us race today."

Maybe, those were in his thoughts too during the 1 hour, 23 minutes and 12.058 seconds that he negotiated the 305.609-km layout in winning the San Marino Grand Prix.

What an animal, this Schumi. Added the German: "Today everyone in the team, and I really say everyone, from the president to the engineers to the technicians to the mechanics to the cooks, everyone gave me great support."

* * *

Recent reports show a neck and neck competition between the "moving" Strada 4x4 and the new Isuzu Fuego 4x4 insofar as the pickup market is concerned. I'm not surprised. For years in the running, both auto giants have been known to exhibit a strong showing in that category.

But in the AUV market, Toyota has inched "a little ahead" again with its new Revo VX200. Before that, the Crosswind has been lording it over together with Mitsubishi's Adventure and, surely, the entry of the new Revo VX200 will trigger another round of stiff, nay friendly, competitions among the three.

So, who said the automotive industry is still in the pits? Can't you see that new models are being rolled out like dice in a casino?

* * *

Do you know that last year, there was an average of 293,000 passengers per day at the Light Rail Transit Line 1, giving the government revenues worth P1.5 billion?

This is now the reason the government, through Assistant Secretary Robert Castañares of the Department of Transportation and Communications, intends to implement shortly a $210-million capacity build-up project to generate an additional 67,000 passengers per direction per hour. The project intends to buy 12 new air-conditioned, four-car trains, with the existing trains to be upgraded.

Congratulations to Mitsubishi (hey, Mr. Arlan Reyes, have you asked permission already from Mr. Mel Dizon about our supposed beer session on or before May 1?) for already having submitted the breakthrough proposal that is currently undergoing review.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Vacations, long weekends especially, make the family happy. But happier they will be if they have a driver who knows the true meaning of safe driving when they go out of town. Which is to say safe driving is avoiding overspeeding as that is courting hell instead of heaven.

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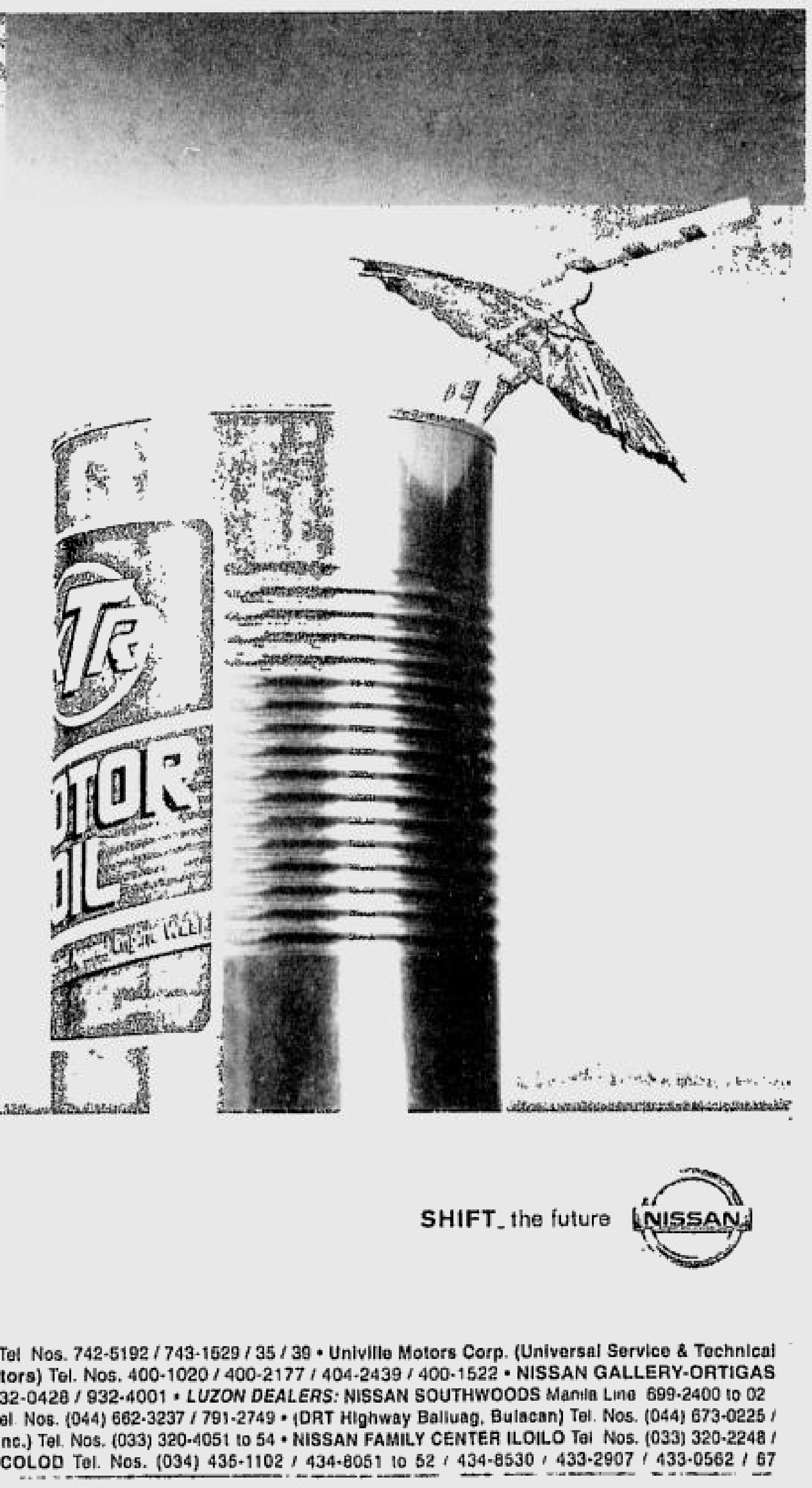

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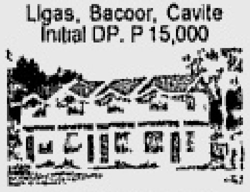

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CASCADE

GININTUANG MASAGANANG ANI
Sa Modern Agriculture

Invitation for Expression of Interest Local Technical Assistant/Specialist in Agricultural Technology Development and Promotion

In the scope of the Agricultural Production Systems Development Component, CASCADE is currently seeking one Local Technical Assistant (LTA) or Specialist in the field of Technology Development and Promotion. CASCADE is currently operating in the uplands of Nueva Vizcaya, Benguet and Nueva Ecija.

Applications are invited from qualified agriculturist with at least ten years experience in planning, development, extension, agricultural research, alliance building and networking with Local Government Units (LGUs). They should be physically fit and capable of working in the field/remote areas.

Expressions of interest together with full CVs and other pertinent documents in support of the application for the above mentioned areas of specialization should be submitted no later than **May 9, 2003.** Only qualified candidates will receive an acknowledgement and be given the full Terms of Reference (TOR).

All correspondence should be addressed to the following:

The Project Co-Directors
DA-CASCADE
Bonfal West, 3700 Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya
Tel. No. (078)321-2605 & 321-4128
Telefax No. (078)805-3611
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(PDI - Apr 24 & 25, 2003)

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INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY & BID

NEA Management Team (NMT) invites CONTRACTORS to apply for pre-qualification and if subsequently found qualified to bid for the SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATERIALS intended for the ENERGIZATION of the following BARANGAYS.

	Single Phase (km)	Open Sec. (km)	Under built (km)
1. Barangay Langka, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija	3.185	0.850	1.100
2. Barangay Palale, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija	5.855	0.925	1.155

A complete set of BID DOCUMENTS may be purchased starting April 30, 2003 upon submission of a written application and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ONE THOUSAND (P1,000.00) PESOS from the PBAC Secretariat NMT, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija.

The NMT reserves the right to reject any or all bids, without offering any reason, ban any bidder with unsatisfactory or derogatory track records and award the CONTRACT to any CONTRACTOR whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC is most advantageous to NMT.

For additional inquiries, please call the PBAC Secretariat at Cellphone Nos. 0916-782-0356, 0917-566-4312 or 0916-586-1093.

(Sgd.) ENGR. FRANK T. WY
NMT-PBAC Chairman

(PDI – April 24 & 27, 2003)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF DISPOSITION

The National Housing Authority is inviting *Offers to Purchase/Lease* by way of sealed bids the following properties on *"As is - Where is"* basis:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	BASE PRICE
001	11,570 sqm Industrial lot with improvements (shipping/port related facilities	Macabalan-Puntod Cagayan de Oro City	SALE: PhP8,192/sqm. or PhP94,781,440.00 LEASE: PhP32.76/sqm./mo. or PhP379,033.20/mo.
002	Foreclosed 200 sqm. lot with unfinished structure	Barangay Patag Cagayan de Oro City	PhP465,000.00

Payment schemes for the abovecited properties are *cash, modified cash* (6 equal installments without interest) and *installment* for a maximum period of *ten (10) years* with graduated interest rates.

Bidding Materials can be secured for a non-refundable fee of *PhP200.00* from the *Commercial/Industrial Bids & Awards Committee (COINBAC) c/o the Commercial & Industrial Estates Department (CIED)*, Mezzanine Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City and the Cagayan de Oro Project Office located at Don Julio Pacana Street, Macabalan Puntod, Cagayan de Oro. For inquiry, please call *Ms. Evelyn V. Ramos, Manager, Sales Div., CIED* or *Ms. Neri A. Subido* at the following Tel. Nos. *CIED (02) 923-0390, (02) 928-4561 local 302 & 303.*

SCHEDULE

A.	Submission of Pre-Qualifications Requirements	April 25 to May 12, 2003 office hours NHA - Project Office Compound
B.	Pre-Bid Conference	May 12, 2003, 2:30 p.m. NHA-CDO Project Office Compound
C.	Submission of Sealed Bids	May 14, 2003, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. NHA-CDO Project Office Compound
D.	Opening of Sealed Bids	May 14, 2003, 10:30 a.m. NHA-CDO Project Office Compound

The Authority reserves the right to *reject* any or all offers or any part thereof or to *waive* any required formalities and *accept* offers most advantageous to the interest of NHA.

(Sgd.) JOSEPH PETER S. SISON
Assistant General Manager/Chairman, COINBAC

(PDI - April 24 & 28, 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Alabang Country Club Certificate No. B-0269 issued to Rogelio S. Pantaleon. (PDI-April 5, 12, 24, 2003)

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Ma. Tangulan Bautista Aguinaldo

(widow of Emilio Aguinaldo, Jr. †)
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on April 22, 2003 at the age of ninety two

Her children and grandchildren:

Alice and Jose P. Dizon (†) and son Jose Ismael

Achilles and Clemencia Mateo and children Anginette,
Emilio IV and Maris Agatha

Consuelo and Rep. Plaridel M. Abaya and children
Peter Anthony and Emelda Miranda
Joseph Emilio and Rowena Abesamis
Michael Angelo and Flordeliza Ang
Victor Andrew and Mercedes Benares
Paul Plaridel, Jr.
Francis Gerald

Emilie and Danilo V. Pulido and son Emilio Maximo

Vice Mayor Reynaldo and Cynthia Gutierrez and children
Angelo Emilio and Amerfina Celine

Binkie (†) and Larry B. Datiles and children Angelica Frances,
Roberto Emilio and Ana Maria Karla

Her brothers and sisters Bayani (†) and Teodorica, Ruben (†) and Concordia, Purificacion and Buenaventura (†) Realica, Paz (†) and Marcelino (†) Janairo, Angelina (†) and Honesto Ramos, Ramon (†) and Consolacion (†), Florosa, Florentino, Jr. and Vihonor, Theresita (†) and Simplicio Congbalay, Generoso, Felicisimo and Dolores and all her great grandchildren and other relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul

Interment will be on Sunday, April 27, 2003 at the Divine Memorial Park, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

In lieu of flowers, the family will appreciate donations to Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite.

"God is... like a gardener who takes good care of His flowers and waters them, and only cuts them when they're at their best, in full bloom. God takes soul to himself when they're ripe."
St. JoseMaria Escriva

Celia Guevara Nepomuceno

August 12, 1927 - April 22, 2003

Her sisters **Pat Jacinto** and **Lina N. Harmon**; and brother **Ricardo Nepomuceno Jr.**; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, nephews and nieces request the pious reader to offer a prayer for her soul.

She lies in state at St. Joseph's Chapel in Mt. Carmel Church, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Makati South Cemetery on Friday, April 25, 2003 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at the St. Joseph's Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, your donations will be appreciated for the projects of the ***FOUNDATION FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, INC.***

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• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS •
• DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS •
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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family and relatives of the late

GODOFREDO "TOTOY" J. ALANO

who joined his Creator on April 16, 2003 sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flower, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and condoled with us in our moment of grief.

Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

Salvador "Buddy" Noche Dimailig

of Odiongan, Romblon and San Francisco Del Monte, Q.C.

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on April 18, 2003 at the age of 66.

His bereaved wife **AURORA**; children **BRANDON** and **Cindee**, **JAY**, **ANNA** and **Raymund**, **MIKE** and **Ann**, **PAOLO** and **Fatima**; grandchild **KYLE**; mother **PETRA**; sisters **PERLA** and **NORMA**; other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the San Pedro Bautista Parish Mortuary, San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City.

Interment will be on April 27, 2003, Sunday at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, after the Nine O'clock (9:00 a.m.) Mass.

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Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
THIRD ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Loan No. PH-P184
IFB NO. DPISU-CW-101

1. The Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Education (DepEd) has received an **ODA Loan from JAPAN BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION** (hereinafter referred to as JBIC) toward the cost of Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Disbursement of an ODA Loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans" No party other than the Government of the Philippines shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claim to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only a part of the project cost. As for the remaining portion, the Government of the Philippines will take appropriate measures for finance.
2. JBIC requires the bidders and contractors, as well as the Government of the Philippines, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:
   a) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question
   b) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans if it at any times determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA
3. The DepEd Project Implementation Support Unit (DepEd-PISU) for TEEP through the DepED-BAC ("the Employer") now invites sealed bids from qualified eligible bidders for the **Construction Completion of a One (1) Unit-Two (2) Storey DECS Division Office Building** ("the Works") in the province of **Biliran**. Local contractors should be accredited with the Philippines Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) and is classified at least **"Medium Sub-Category A"**.
4. Pre-bid Conference shall be held at the Division Office on **May 12, 2003 at 2:00 PM**. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents, at the office of the Employer, at DepEd Division Office, Naval, Biliran, Telephone nos. 500-92-79/500-92-81.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting **April 28-May 2, 2003** with submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 2,500.00)** per set. The form of payment will be in cash or by cashier's check.
6. All bids must be accompanied by a security of **two and a half (2.5%)** percent of total bid price or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency in the form of bank guarantee or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable bank, and must be delivered to DepEd Division Office, Naval, Biliran on or before **10:00 a.m. on May 26, 2003**. Bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
7. The estimated date of award is 45 calendar days upon the date of opening of bids.
8. The committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids which may be found disadvantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **CRISANTEMA T. PASTOR**
Pre/Post-Qualifications Bids and Awards Committee
Chairman

(PDI – April 24, 2003)

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INQUIRER AVP for Marketing and Classifieds Donald Patrick Lim receives his Certified Professional Marketer (CPM) Certificate from the Philippine Marketing Association President Dr. Leonardo Garcia and CPM Chairman Mr. Rene Esguerra. The Certified Professional Marketer, CPM (Asia-Pacific) is the formal endorsement of professional status for professionals who have attained a competent level of academic and practical understanding of marketing in the Asia-Pacific region. This professional marketing qualification will be recognized by all the national marketing bodies in the Asia-Pacific region. The CPM (Asia-Pacific) status is conferred by the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation (APMF) and will be conferred to candidates who have successfully passed the CPM (Asia-Pacific) Qualifying Examinations and has 5 years relevant marketing experience in an Asia-Pacific country. Lim is the 12th CPM (Asia-Pacific) in the Philippines, and one of the youngest in the region.

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"The Lord is my light and my salvation –"
Psalm 27

Our Dearly Beloved

CARLOS MIGUEL B. PALANCA

Peacefully joined our Lord
on Apri 22, 2003 at the age of 43.

His wife **Maria Paz**; mother **Mercedes**; brother **Carlos III** and sisters **Mercedes**, **Sylvia**, **Elizabeth**, **Olivia**, **Maria Asuncion**, **Karleen Zita**, **Angelita**; brothers and sister-in-law **Teodoro Pleno**, **Antonio Quirino Jr.**, **Jose Honrado**, **Criselda Cecilio**, and **Marc Roces**; nephews and nieces **Charlene**, **Juanito**, **Jose**, **Agustin**, **Angela Rose**, **Michelle Marie**, **Antonio III**, **Sylvia Maria Ana**, **Christine Marie**, **Jose Carlo**, **Marco**, **Noelle**, **Carlos IV**, **Carl Anthony**, **Charles Cristopher**, **Jill Wednesday**, **Juan Carlos**, **Sophia Marguerite**, **John Karl**, **Karla Amanda**, **Ralph Jonathan**, **Jose Angelo**; grand nephews and nieces; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the CPJ Bldg. Chapel, Ground Floor, 105 C. Palanca Jr. St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Mass will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m., Friday, April 25, 2003.

Interment follows at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in
Me will live, even though he dies;
and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

FELIPE "Phil" P. TENZA

(February 17, 1948 - April 22, 2003)
of Cubao, Quezon City

Peacefully joined our Lord
on April 22, 2003 at the age of 55.

He is survived by his loving mother **Felipa**; brothers **Dalmy**, **Eliseo Jr. (Jun)**, and **Narciso (Boy)**; sisters **Glory** and **Marita**, and nephews and nieces.

His body lies in state at St. Peters Memorial Chapels, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on April 26, 2003 at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City in the morning.

BITTEE (BETTY) UY vda. de FERNANDEZ

of Cauayan, Isabela and Manila

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 18, 2003
at the age of 85.

Her children **BENITO (†)** and **TERESITA**, **JOSE & ARSENIA**, **JUANITO & MYRNA**, **JOHNNY & VIOLETA**, **NORMA & PETER**, **LOLITA & WELLY**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, sisters, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul,

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, April 27, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Arlington Memorial Chapels.

"Nothing that is remembered
fades and no one who has touched
a heart truly passes away."

Amado "Madz" S. Castrillo

Artist-Sculptor, Writer –
Illustrator, Painter

Peacefully joined His Creator on Monday,
April 21, 2003 at the age of 68.

His loving wife, Aurea (Pakingan); children, Drs. Gerardo and Dina Gonzales, Cereza, Ronald and Remedios, Maximillan, Rachel, Jonnel and Lucita, Sandro and Salome; grandchildren, Giancarlo, Paolo Miguel, Karen May, Percival, Ziegfred, Ivan, Angela, Reginald, Gabrielle and Pamela; brother Eduardo, sisters Dolly and Lory, in-laws, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the family's residence at 380 Anabu II-A, Imus, Cavite.

Interment will be on Saturday,
April 26, 2003
at the Manila Memorial Park,
Dasmariñas, Cavite at 4:00 p.m.
after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

The Management & Staff
of
Firenze Corporation
Condoles with the family of the late

LUIS K. S. LIM

Father of
President: **Florencio C. Lim**
Operations Manager: **Margarita C. Lim**

Who peacefully joined our Creator
on April 19, 2003 at the age of 85.

His bereaved wife **Chua Siam**
His Children, Grandchildren, Great grandchildren:

- **Lucila**
- **Lucio & Lourdes**
  - **Lorraine**
  - **Lawrence & Shirley**
    - **Lauren Stephen**
    - **Lauren Stevenson**
  - **Laurette & Dexter**
  - **Louiejon**
  - **LaraJane**
- **Lourdes**
- **Florencio & Joyce**
  - **Janelle & Donn**
    - **Miguel Iñigo**
  - **Frederick Joel**
  - **Francis Julian**
  - **Jaquelyn Florence**
- **Margarita & Edgar (†)**
- **Evaristo & Betty**
  - **Barbara Jane**
  - **Eugene Brian**
  - **Edwin Benson**
  - **Endee Kristel**

His Brothers & Sister:

Narciso & Nita, **Cirilo**, **Juanita**,
Marcelo (†), **Alexander (†)**

His body lies in state at Funeraria Paz,
Chapel B, North Wing, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment to be announced later.

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Business forms anti-graft foundation

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BUSINESS groups led by the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations Inc. and Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry have formed an anti-corruption foundation that would seek to prevent and prosecute corrupt practices in the country.

In a news statement, Creba council of leaders chair Jaime Cura announced that Creba, the PCCI and at least nine other business groups decided to form the Business Against Graft and Corruption Inc., or Bagcor, because corruption had grown to "ominous proportion."

"It has become so ingrained in our culture that graft and corruption has become SOP (standard operating procedure) in all government and private transactions," Cura said.

He said as a foundation registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Bagcor would deploy its own "agents" who would help in reviewing the government bureaucratic system to pinpoint the most common areas where corruption occurred, such as procurement and licensing.

Cura said Bagcor's agents would also be deployed to help prosecute corrupt government and private individuals through entrapments and by providing testimonies in their arraignment.

He said these agents would be deputized by the Office of the Ombudsman in its fight against this growing scourge of the country.

Apart from Creba and the PCCI, the members of Bagcor are Employers Confederation of the Philippines, Metro Manila Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Philippine Constructors Association, Association of Makati Industries, the United Architects of the Philippines, Philippine Association of Hograisers Inc., National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc., Federation of Cattle Raisers Association of the Philippines and the United Broiler Raisers of the Philippines.

The World Bank, citing records of the Office of the Ombudsman, has reported that the Philippine government has lost some $31.5 billion, or around P1.2 trillion, in the last 25 years because of corruption.

This translates to some $31.5 billion, or around P48 billion, in leakage every year.

In a recent study, the Social Weather Stations reported that the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs were the two most corrupt agencies of the government.

Transco completes ₱258-M relocation plan

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. disclosed yesterday that it had completed a P258-million project to relocate lahar-affected transmission lines in Bacolor, Pampanga.

Transco vice president Winifredo Pangilinan said with the project's completion, the Luzon grid was now more reliable.

Lahar flows from Mount Pinatubo buried a number of steel towers and poles in Pampanga.

"In some areas, the steel towers carrying 230-kilovolt lines were half-buried in lahar," Pangilinan said.

The lines involved include those linking the Hermosa substation to those in San Jose, Balintawak and Mexico towns.

"This situation has also resulted in frequent line trippings (power outages) due to increased proximity of the lines to growing vegetation underneath them," Pangilinan added.

The relocation project, which was started in 1997, involved the construction of 42 steel towers and 30 steel poles. The lines account for a combined length of 20 kilometers.

Pangilinan said the new towers and poles used deeper and stronger foundations that were more suited to the unstable soil of lahar-filled areas.

Transco president Alan Ortiz said in March that the firm expected to have sold by yearend some of its subtransmission assets spread across the nation.

Ortiz said the state-run firm was in talks with 12 distribution utilities for the sale of the assets, which were valued at a total of P8.9 billion.

He explained that subtransmission systems were those linking Transco's high-voltage transmission lines and the utilities' distribution lines.

BSP studies 7-yr booking of SPV-related losses

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is planning to allow banks to book for seven years losses that they may incur for transferring assets to special-purpose vehicles, according to persons familiar with the matter.

If approved, the plan is expected to make banks more flexible when raising their capital base.

In an interview yesterday, BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes disclosed that central bank officials were already consulting the Bankers Association of the Philippines, Chamber of Thrift Banks and Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines about the proposal.

In a separate interview, BAP executive director Leonilo Coronel said banks were amenable to the central bank's proposal.

The BSP is set to issue a new circular on how banks must treat transactions involving special-purpose vehicles.

The central bank wants to ensure that banks planning to get rid of their non-performing assets, including foreclosed assets and non-performing loans, will have enough capital to absorb possible losses from the sale of these assets at a discount.

Investors planning to create special-purpose vehicles to take out banks' assets are usually keen on buying assets at steep discounts.

Cash outlays are normally equivalent to 20 to 30 percent of the assets' book value, while the rest of the payment is usually in the form of long-term notes or subordinated debts.

Coronel said securities that would remain in a bank's books as part of the asset transfer would still have inherent value during the first year of the sale.

He said debt papers could further improve in value once the special-purpose vehicle proponents were successful in the rehabilitation of the companies whose loans had been transferred by banks.

He said under the proposed guidelines, banks would still regularly mark-to-market debt papers based on appraisals by auditors accredited by the central bank.

DOF to go up against bid to derail VAT on banks

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said yesterday it would go up against a thrift bank's bid to derail the implementation of the value-added tax on banks and other financial institutions.

"It is not by choice. For as long as that is the law, it is our responsibility to implement it," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said in an interview.

The finance department is asking Congress to pass a law that will retain the gross receipts tax on banks in view of the more costly VAT.

On Tuesday, Real Bank Inc. asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to declare as unconstitutional provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code and revenue regulations of the Bureau of Internal Revenue implementing the 10-percent VAT on financial institutions.

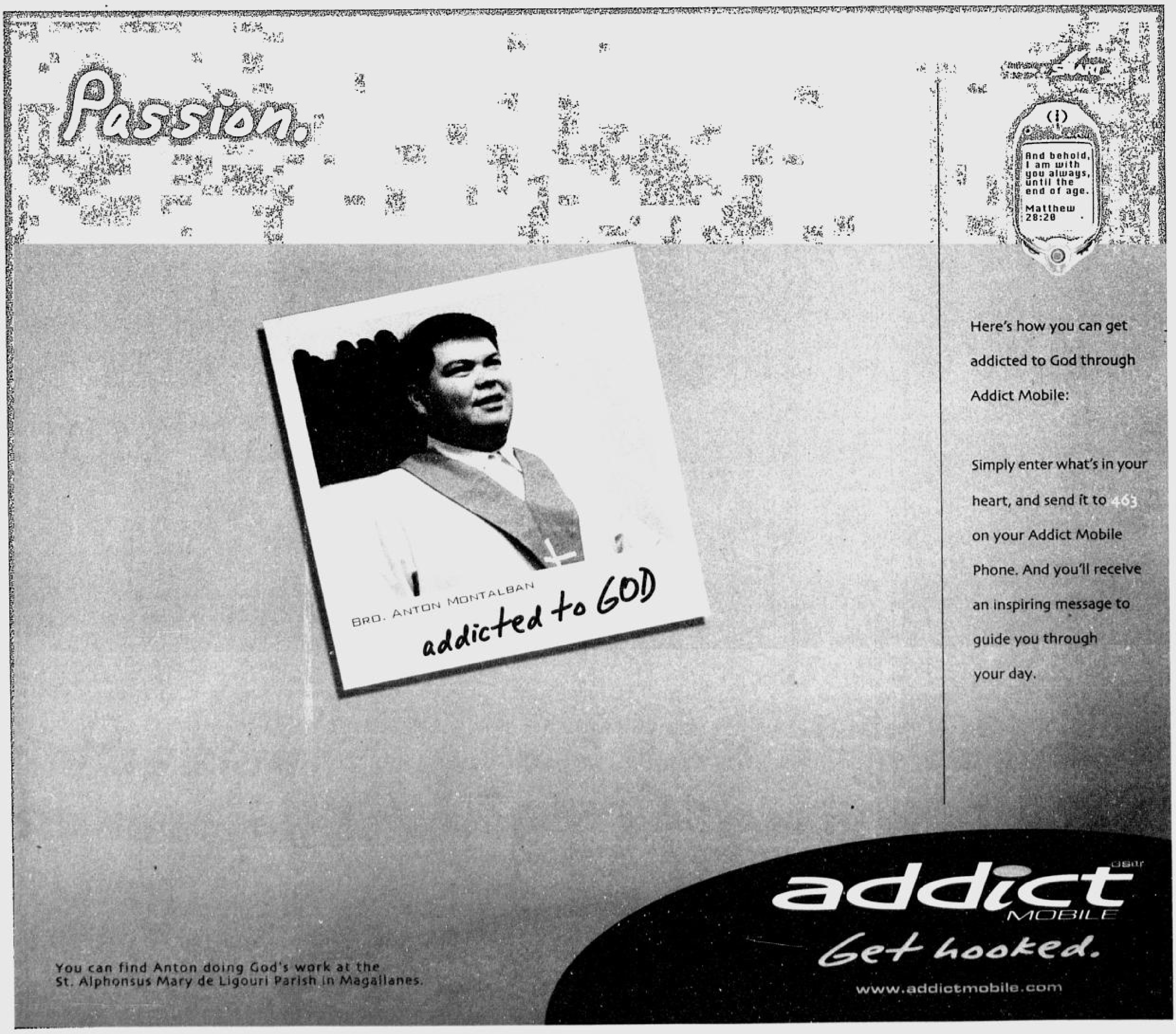
Camacho disclosed that the finance department would re-submit to Congress this week a proposal to retain the GRT now imposed on banks and other financial institutions in lieu of the VAT.

He explained the finance department's position had always been in favor of the GRT over the VAT, except that Congress threw a monkey wrench into the plan when it also exempted professionals from the VAT.

The finance department has maintained that it would rather live with the "administrative nightmare" of the VAT on financial institutions than allow the exemption of professionals from the VAT.

Other banks are expected to support Real Bank's case.

"Hopefully we will have the TRO by Friday," Real Bank president Reynaldo Sarmiento said in an interview yesterday.



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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Among ancient Filipinos, the egg was sacred enough to figure in peace pacts

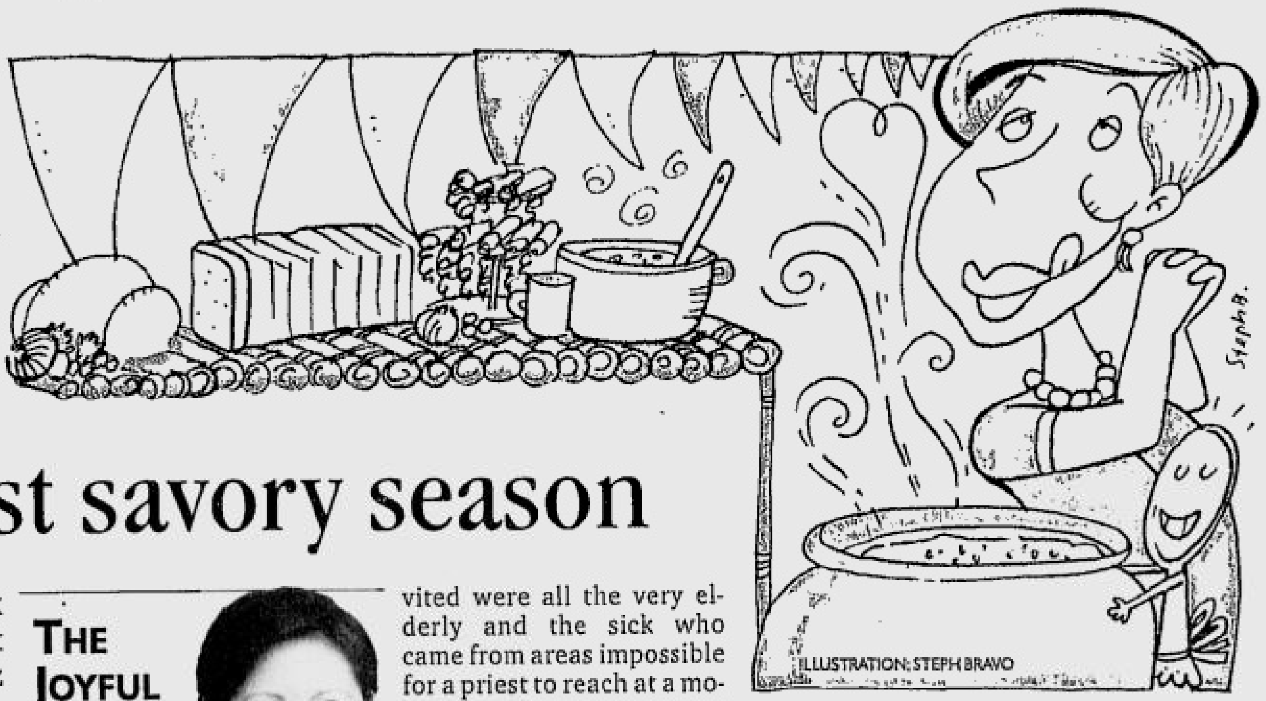
ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

A most savory season

THE JOYFUL COOK
Felice Prudente Sta. Maria

THE JOYFUL Cook was enjoying the last spoonfuls of Arroz con Crema.

"This cinnamon and lemon-rind flavored pudding made with thickest cream is the highlight of Easter cuisine for me," she told Saint Sandok, the talking cooking spoon she inherited from her grand aunt. "It's not easy to make, needing six hours of simmering over extremely low heat so each rice grain absorbs as much cream as possible, but Easter Sunday would not be the same for me. Its plainer version made with milk is an everyday *postre* and not festival fare as far as I'm concerned."

"Today we think of Easter as ending on Resurrection Sunday, but it used to be celebrated for three days with special food like your *arroz* stretching into Tuesday," Sandok recalled. "Then on the next Saturday and Sunday, patrons hosted an annual overnight open-house event at which they served fiesta food," recalled Sandok. "Invited were all the very elderly and the sick who came from areas impossible for a priest to reach at a moment's notice for the giving of Extreme Unction.

"Hosts made sure that a rich custard like leche flan, and native sweet puddings like molded ube jalea and maja blanca were served."

Easter animals

"When you were in Lola Uning's kitchen, did she ever think of Easter bunnies made of egg white or marshmallow like the ones sold now?" TJC wondered.

"Bunnies were associated with Easter in the Philippines only when the American colonial period settled in," Sandok replied. "Spanish era Easter was a devout Christian affair where passion plays and processions took centerstage. American Easter practices were more secular than old Spanish customs.

"The only Spanish Cuaresma custom I can think of that is associated with an ani-

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- Dotted Lapu-Lapu Fillet & Bamboo Fungus with M. Wintermelon Soup
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- Crispy Fried Chicken
- Steamed Crabs
- Birthday Noodles or Fried Rice
- Mango Sago
- Butchi
Before ~~P 7,800~~ Now: P 4,800
Set Menu for 12
- Suckling Pig Cold Cuts Combination
- Lobster Mango Roll
- Dotted Lapu-Lapu Fillet with Shark's Fin Soup
- Peking Duck 2 Ways
- Black Mushroom with Local Abalone & Veg
- Steamed Lapu-Lapu
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- Mango Sago & Butchi
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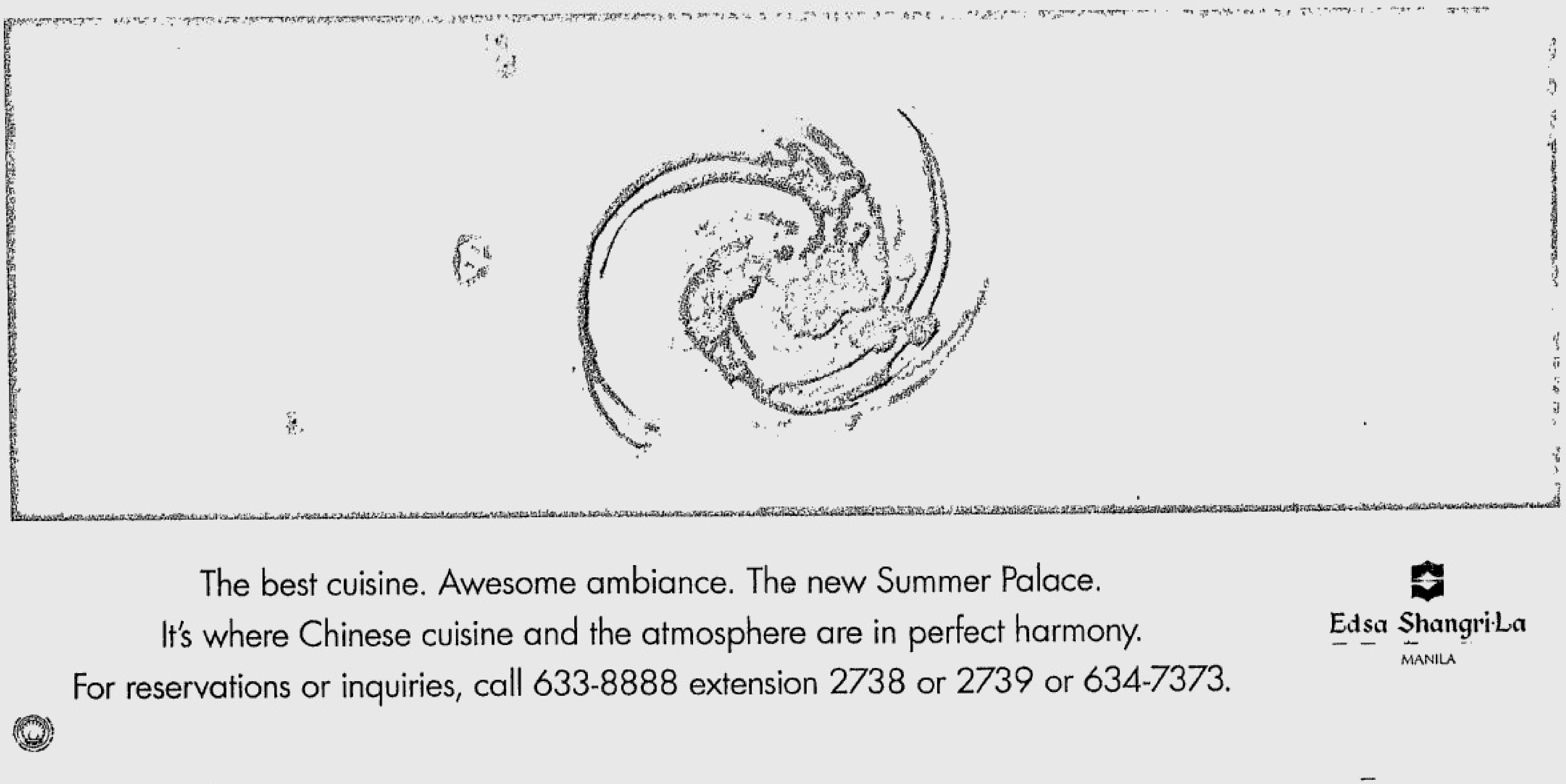

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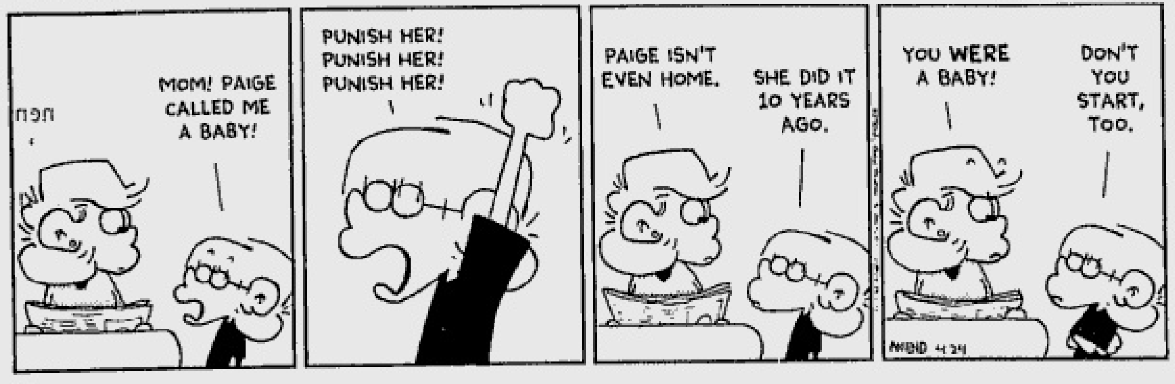
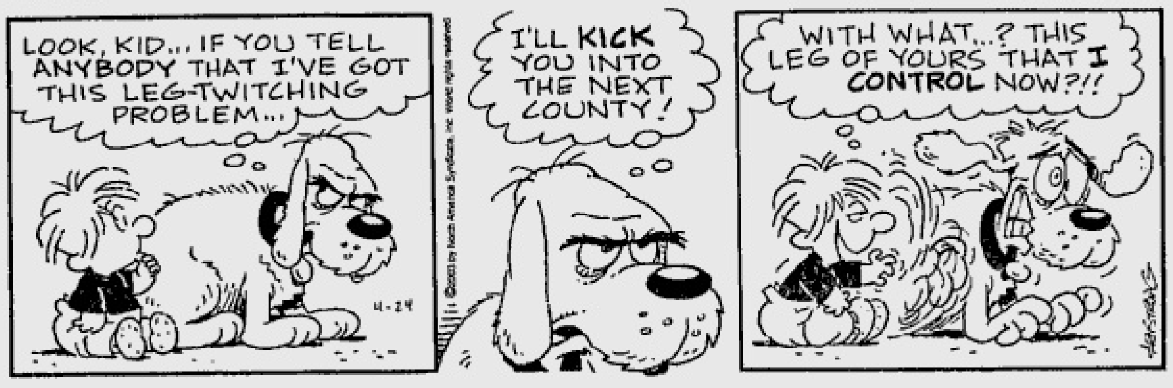
THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2003

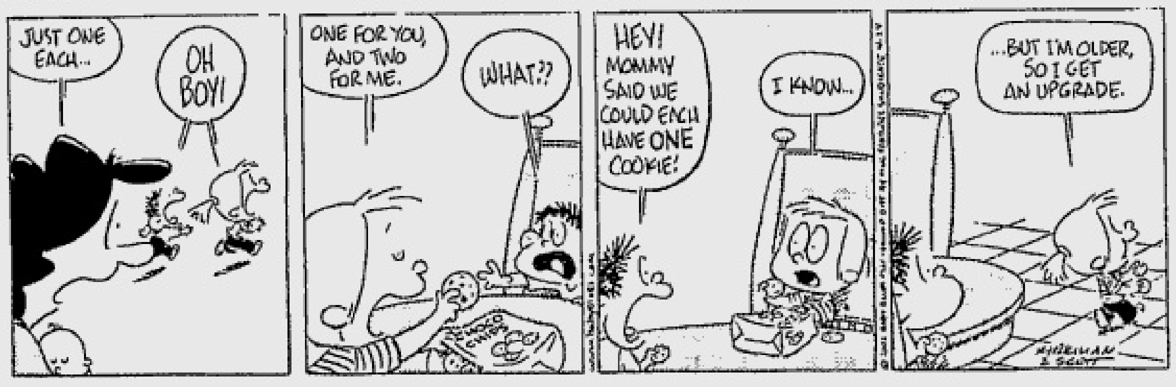
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


MOM! PAIGE CALLED ME A BABY!
PUNISH HER! PUNISH HER! PUNISH HER!
PAIGE ISN'T EVEN HOME.
SHE DID IT 10 YEARS AGO.
YOU WERE A BABY!
DON'T YOU START, TOO.
AMEND 4-24

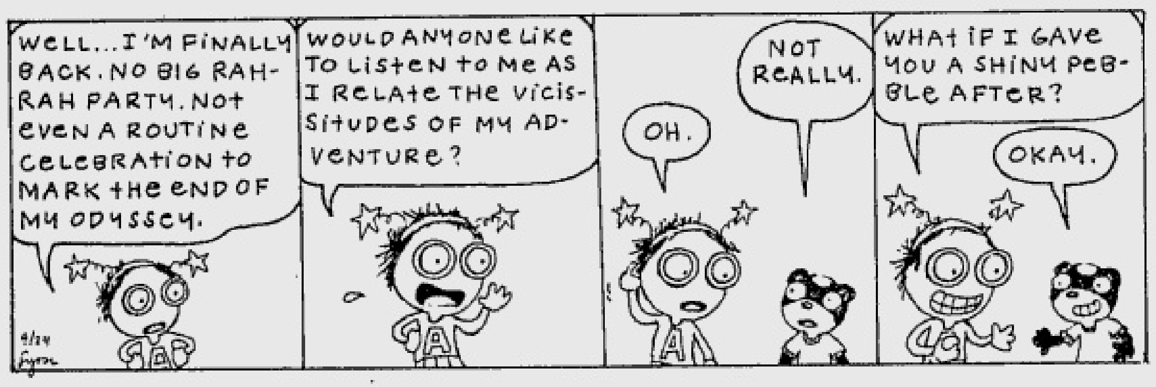
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


LOOK, KID... IF YOU TELL ANYBODY THAT I'VE GOT THIS LEG-TWITCHING PROBLEM...
I'LL KICK YOU INTO THE NEXT COUNTY!
WITH WHAT...? THIS LEG OF YOURS THAT I CONTROL NOW?!!
4-24

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


JUST ONE EACH...
OH BOY!
ONE FOR YOU, AND TWO FOR ME.
WHAT??
HEY! MOMMY SAID WE COULD EACH HAVE ONE COOKIE!
I KNOW...
...BUT I'M OLDER, SO I GET AN UPGRADE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WELL... I'M FINALLY BACK. NO BIG RAH-RAH PARTY. NOT EVEN A ROUTINE CELEBRATION TO MARK THE END OF MY ODYSSEY.
WOULD ANYONE LIKE TO LISTEN TO ME AS I RELATE THE VICISSITUDES OF MY ADVENTURE?
OH.
NOT REALLY.
WHAT IF I GAVE YOU A SHINY PEBBLE AFTER?
OKAY.
4/24

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have much physical strength in your approach to life. You go after what you want. You are dynamic, enthused and purposeful. Others notice your energy when you are present. You are courageous and will defend your beliefs and the rights of others. Expect more solitude this year to learn something important.
Birthdate of: Ella Fitzgerald, singer; Renee Zellweger, actress; Al Pacino, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Subtle, spiritual revelations could occur to you today. In a completely different vein, surprise contacts with the government or large institutions might also take place.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Expect to meet someone unusual today. This person could eventually become a friend who is a bit of a character—but likable. You most certainly will learn something new from this person.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Surprise news from above—bosses, parents or teachers—makes you sit up and listen today. The net result is that you want more freedom, more independence and more out of life.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Unexpected opportunities to travel, expand your education or take advanced training in something might come your way today. If they appeal to you, say yes.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You are pleased to discover that a small gift, an advantage, the use of somebody else's resources or some kind of perk is yours today. (It's nice to get goodies.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Conversations with partners and close friends are unusually lively today. Perhaps others shock you, or you shock them. (It's small stuff, really.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Be open to new technology or new methods of doing things at work. Resistance to new ways is one of the first signs that you are getting old.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Coy flirtations and pleasant conversations that make your heart beat faster might take place today. New love could enter your life. If so, it will be sudden and with someone who is quite different.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Unexpected guests drop in today at home. Or perhaps unusual news arrives on your doorstep. You have nothing to fear: It will be something lighthearted and playful.

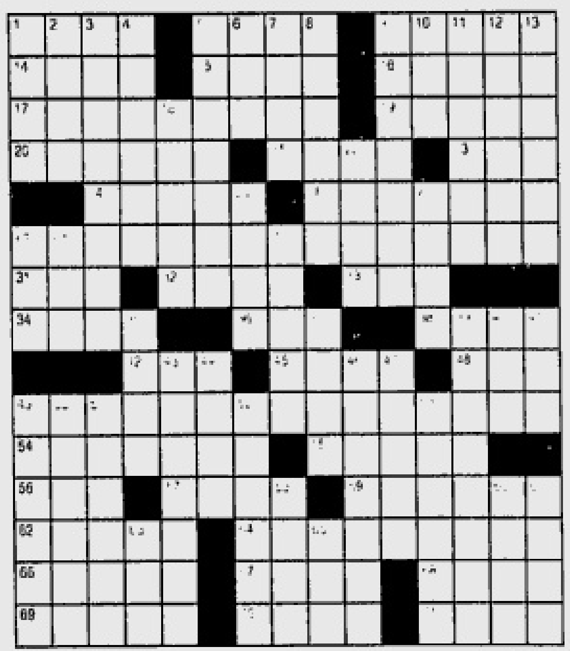
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): New contacts and fresh faces make this a lively, memorable day. Someone could introduce you to an attractive person. (Be still, your beating heart.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Expect to make sudden, impulsive purchases for home or family members today. This could be something that is technological or very modern. You feel bold and experimental buying whatever it is.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel restless, jumpy and excited today. You want to talk to others and have a good time. And why not? Life is short—make the most of it.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Chagall or Connelly
5 Peak in Thessaly
9 Copper-zinc alloy
14 USA part
15 Groza and Gehrig
16 Dark
17 Start of a quip
19 Fry lightly
20 Students: Fr.
21 Sod
23 Curly poker?
24 Garlic-basil sauce
26 Secure a bicycle, e.g.
28 Part 2 of quip
31 Old name of Tokyo
32 Abbreviation in folk-song titles
33 Solidify
34 Armed conflicts
36 Distant
38 Follow orders
42 Fuss
45 "Odelay" Grammy winner
48 Wonderment
49 Part 3 of quip
54 Alternative fuel
55 Seer's deck
56 Now I see!
57 Environs
59 Hayseeds
62 Make payment
64 End of quip
66 Amazing woman?
67 Drummer Keith
68 Renoir subject, perhaps
69 Snaking curves
70 Uses a Singer
71 Catch sight of



By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL
4/24/03

DOWN
1 Broadway "Auntie"
2 __ nitrate
3 Nerve cell
4 Cowardly
5 Retiree
6 Jack of "Barney Miller"
7 Sheep fat
8 Per se
9 Charge for a ride
10 Geneticist's study
11 Degree holders
12 Ride the bench
13 Leaves in hot water?
18 VCR button
22 Greek letters
25 Singer Anita
27 Division word
28 Innovative
29 Harem room
30 Sun-dried brick
35 Actress Thompson
37 Mr. Gingrich
39 Umpire's call
40 Female of the flock
41 Japanese capital?
43 Contributes
44 Olfactory stimulant
46 Kindergarten colors
47 Imperial Russian Ballet, today
49 Bush or Burns
50 Unnamed persons
51 Justice Clarence
52 Flashes of light
53 Signs
58 Sunburn soother
60 Beach of Venice
61 Editor's directive
63 Cool down
65 Blue

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

A	C	T	I	■	I	S	I	S	■	S	T	A	M	P
T	H	A	N	■	N	O	S	E	■	P	O	D	I	A
T	E	X	A	S	T	U	R	N	A	R	O	U	N	D
S	W	I	F	T	E	R	■	D	R	I	L	L	E	R
■	■	■	O	A	R	■	G	E	N	T	■	T	O	E
V	I	R	G	I	N	I	A	R	E	E	L	■	■	■
O	B	I	■	R	E	O	S	■	■	S	A	S	S	Y
L	I	N	K	■	T	U	B	A	L	■	G	A	Y	E
E	D	S	E	L	■	■	A	R	E	S	■	R	N	A
■	■	■	G	E	O	R	G	I	A	P	E	A	C	H
I	S	M	■	S	P	A	S	■	P	I	X	■	■	■
O	P	O	S	S	U	M	■	F	O	C	U	S	E	D
T	E	N	N	E	S	S	E	E	W	A	L	K	E	R
A	L	T	A	R	■	A	R	T	E	■	F	I	R	E
S	L	E	P	T	■	Y	E	A	R	■	S	N	O	W

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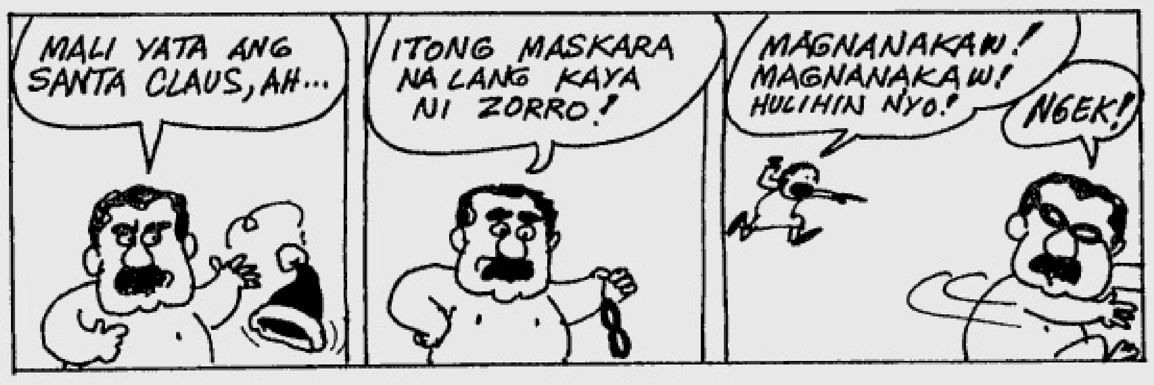
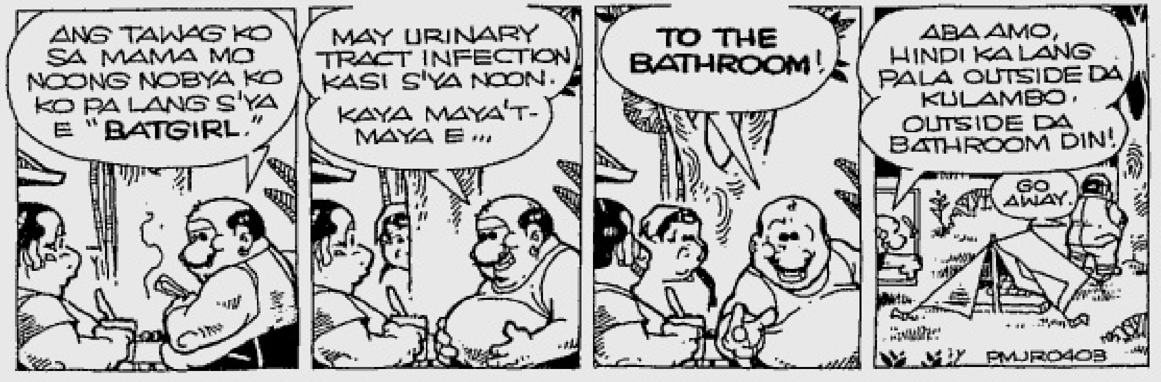
4/24/03

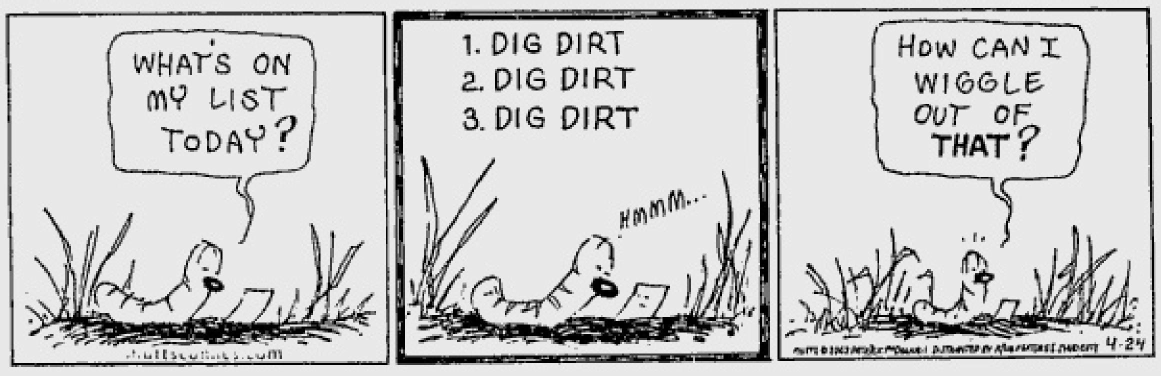
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


MALI YATA ANG SANTA CLAUS, AH...
ITONG MASKARA NA LANG KAYA NI ZORRO!
MAGNANAKAW! MAGNANAKAW! HULIHIN NYO!
NGEK!

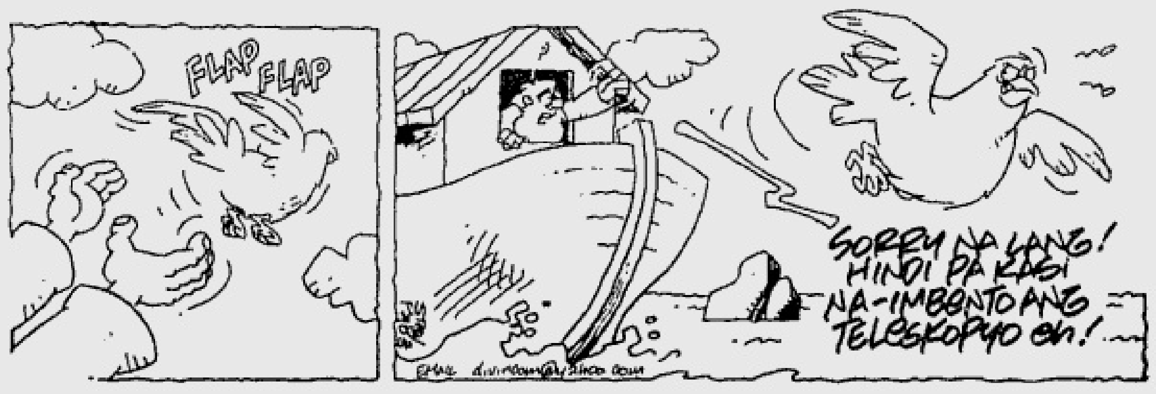
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG TAWAG KO SA MAMA MO NOONG NOBYA KO KO PA LANG S'YA E "BATGIRL."
MAY URINARY TRACT INFECTION KASI S'YA NOON.
KAYA MAYA'T-MAYA E...
TO THE BATHROOM!
ABA AMO, HINDI KA LANG PALA OUTSIDE DA KULAMBO, OUTSIDE DA BATHROOM DIN!
GO AWAY.
PMJR0403

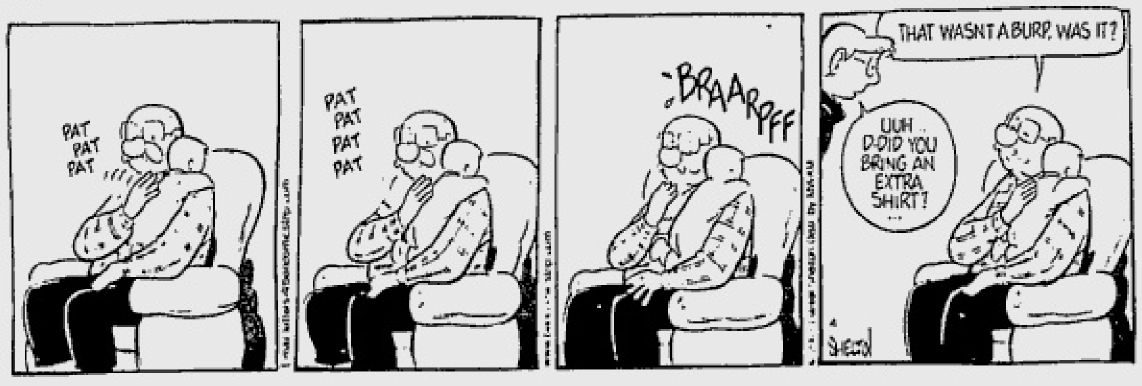
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S ON MY LIST TODAY?
1. DIG DIRT
2. DIG DIRT
3. DIG DIRT
HMMM...
HOW CAN I WIGGLE OUT OF THAT?
4-24

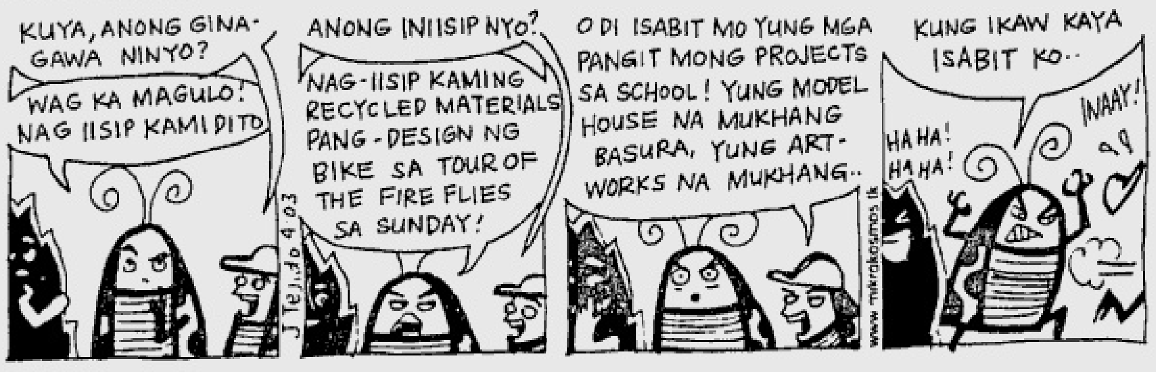
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


FLAP FLAP
SORRY NA LANG! HINDI PA KASI NA-IMBENTO ANG TELESKOPYO eh!

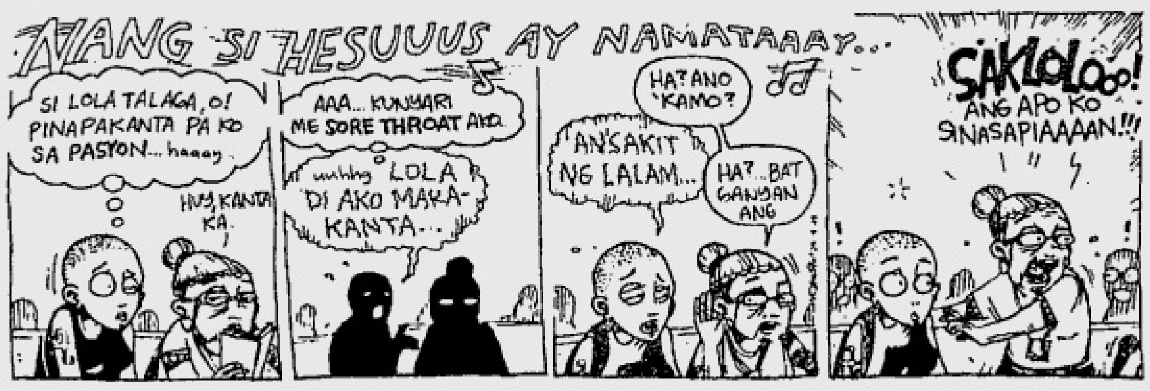
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


PAT PAT PAT
PAT PAT PAT PAT
BRAARPFF
THAT WASN'T A BURP, WAS IT?
UUH... D-DID YOU BRING AN EXTRA SHIRT?
SHELTON

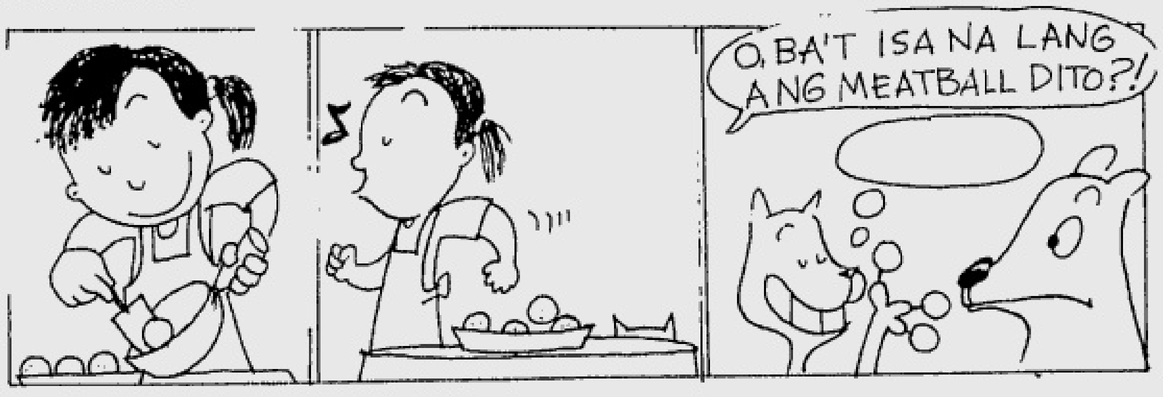
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KUYA, ANONG GINAGAWA NINYO?
WAG KA MAGULO! NAG IISIP KAMI DITO
ANONG INIISIP NYO?
NAG-IISIP KAMING RECYCLED MATERIALS PANG-DESIGN NG BIKE SA TOUR OF THE FIRE FLIES SA SUNDAY!
O DI ISABIT MO YUNG MGA PANGIT MONG PROJECTS SA SCHOOL! YUNG MODEL HOUSE NA MUKHANG BASURA, YUNG ARTWORKS NA MUKHANG...
KUNG IKAW KAYA ISABIT KO..
HA HA! HA HA!
INAAY!
J TEJIDO 4 03
www.mikrokosmos.tk

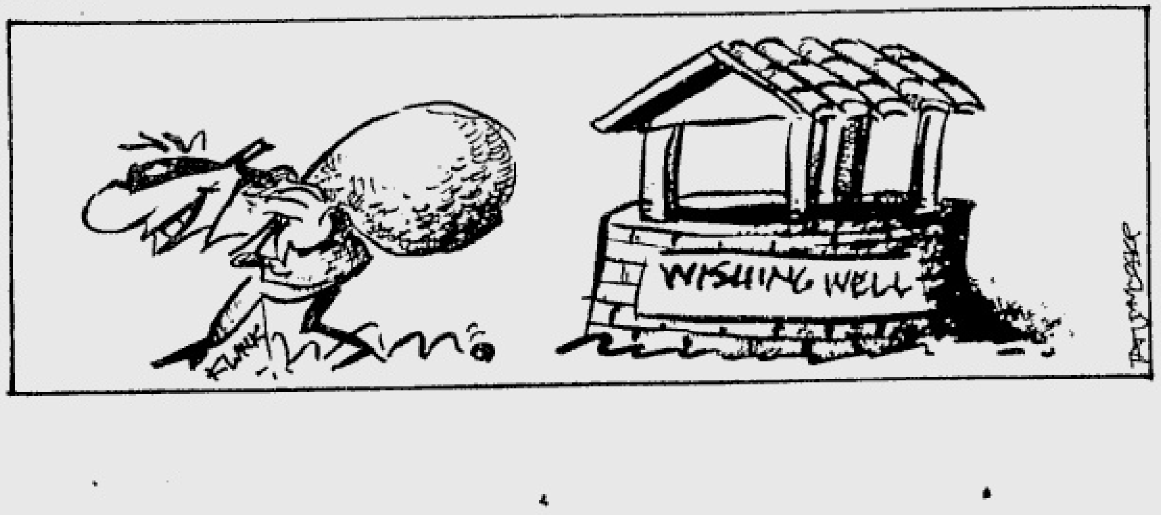
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


NANG SI HESUUUS AY NAMATAAAY...
SI LOLA TALAGA, O! PINAPAKANTA PA KO SA PASYON... haaay
HUY, KANTA KA.
AAA... KUNYARI ME SORE THROAT AKO.
uuhhg LOLA DI AKO MAKAKANTA...
HA? ANO 'KAMO?
AN'SAKIT NG LALAM...
HA?..BAT GANYAN ANG
SAKLOLOOO! ANG APO KO SINASAPIAAAAN!!!

FUZZ THERAPY BY SUSIE AND CALVIN


O, BA'T ISA NA LANG ANG MEATBALL DITO?!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WISHING WELL
KLUNK

Solution to dust-related miseries

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

DUST is bad for asthmatics and folks with respiratory problems. But the mites that thrive on dust are even worse and may cause serious health problems. Lyme disease and allergies are some of the worst. Dustborne mites are also responsible for itchy welts that cause a lot of discomfort and sleepless nights.

The following experience by Cecille Dinglasan of cengayhs61@edsamail.com.ph may just be the solution to dust-related miseries suffered by many of us. She wrote: "Equipped with their wet vacuum gear, the three-man crew sent to us by a housecleaning outfit siphoned off the dust that have accumulated for years in mattresses, pillows and possible dust bins. The dust mite busters also did a good job of cleaning the interior of our van. They stopped regularly to check for dust residues and quit only when there were no more perceivable dust motes. I sleep soundly now and don't suffer from itchy allergy."

We called the company and found out that it is one of the reputable cleaning outfits in town recommended by a known pulmonary doctor to patients suffering from dust-related allergies. Owned and managed by couple Michael and Amar Puyat, Super Cleaners Company specializes in dust-mite cleanup. They use water-based vacuum cleaners that suck the dust into containers. Unlike the traditional dry vacuum cleaner, the water-based unit makes sure that the dust will not fly around the room.

"We do deep extraction of dust up to 10 inch-deep," Amar Puyat explained. She added that typical house mites have a 10-day life cycle but the female is prolific and lays a lot of eggs to perpetuate the species. They thrive in hot and humid places and feed on dust and dry skin flakes among others, she added. For more information, call Puyat at 821-6060 or 0917-6951855 (24-hour text hotline).

Water-shortage misery

Pinky Sinfuego of Dangay Street, Project 7, QC, is in distress. Every household in her neighborhood didn't have a drop of water from the taps for three weeks. She herself spent a fortune on water deliveries just to keep her business going. For three weeks, she had been calling Maynilad. It was only shortly before the Lenten season when the technical staff of Maynilad-Roosevelt branch responded to the pleas of Sinfuego. They delivered water rations to the neighborhood.

"It's not sufficient to meet our basic needs. Needless to say, it's not also enough to keep our business going," she complained. She pleads with Maynilad Water Company to do something.

Cable trouble in Cainta

Mina Umali, a Sky Cable subscriber complained: "With no prior notice, our cable provider cut off all the services in our area at RSG Gueventhhomes in Cainta. I have paid my quarterly dues in advance. I have called up Sky Cable and followed up several times, but the people concerned obviously avoided my calls."

The only explanation offered by Sky Cable was that there were several illegal connections in the area, so they were constrained to disconnect all lines there. The very least Sky Cable can do to its honest subscribers, next to refunding, is to inform subscribers whether or not the service will be resumed. As Mina Umali wrote, "Had Sky Cable informed us, we could have discussed the matter with the homeowners' association."

More comments on credit card collectors

Anne N. Kaquilala (annesqui@yahoo.com) commented that in the name of good customer service, credit card companies should take action to correct the obnoxious methods employed by their collection agencies.

She added the following observation: "Credit card companies earn more by keeping their customers in debt. This is why they allow, and implicitly encourage, customers to pay only the minimum amount due. If customers pay up all their debts due to aggressive collection, what business will they have?

"Apart from membership fee, the creditor is charged 3-3.50 percent monthly compounded interest. Surely, credit card companies are well compensated for all the costs and risks on the money they lend out. In this sense, harassment, pressure and annoyance employed by their collection agencies are unethical, uncalled for, and should not be tolerated."

From concerned consumer (name withheld upon request): "Credit card companies encourage the public to be in debt. Why, for instance, do some companies issue their cardholders unsolicited extra credit cards? I am a Visa cardholder who received an unsolicited Mastercard and been billed an annual membership fee for it. What's more incredible, the company sent me a formal letter reminding me that I have not sent my payment for the Mastercard bill!

"What is the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas doing about these abuses to credit card holders? In connection with the issue you raised about obnoxious credit card collectors, I fully support a legislative action against the unfair practice."

Greenhills parking fee

The complaint of Lita Cruz (litacc41@yahoo.com) against exorbitant parking fees charged recently by Greenhills shopping complex drew a lot of feedback from customers. Effective March 31, the parking fee was raised from a flat rate of P20 to P20 for the first three hours, P10 per hour thereafter.

Cruz wrote: "We senior citizens who leisurely spend very long hours at the establishments there don't deserve to pay the exorbitant parking fees. If the Greenhills management cannot be persuaded to lower the parking fee, they can perhaps give discounts to senior citizens who drive their own car."

Dodo Angus of BF Homes Parañaque commented that the reasonable parking fee charged by Greenhills Shopping Complex in the past used to be one of the reasons why more shoppers patronized the establishments than they did neighboring malls. The new fees would no doubt drive away customers.

Angus added: "There is one section in Alabang Town Center where the flat rate is only P10. In addition to that, there's a 50 percent senior citizen discount. In the name of goodwill to its customers, the management of Greenhills shopping complex ought to at least give senior citizen car drivers their rightfully deserved discount."

Smoking at malls

Joseph Riego wrote: "Whatever happened to the municipal ordinance passed by local government units—Manila, Quezon City, Mandaluyong, and others—against smoking in public and closed-in places? Why does the Megamall management condone smoking? Specifically, smokers are allowed near escalators, where a lot of people pass and are exposed to secondhand smoke."

E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph or lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

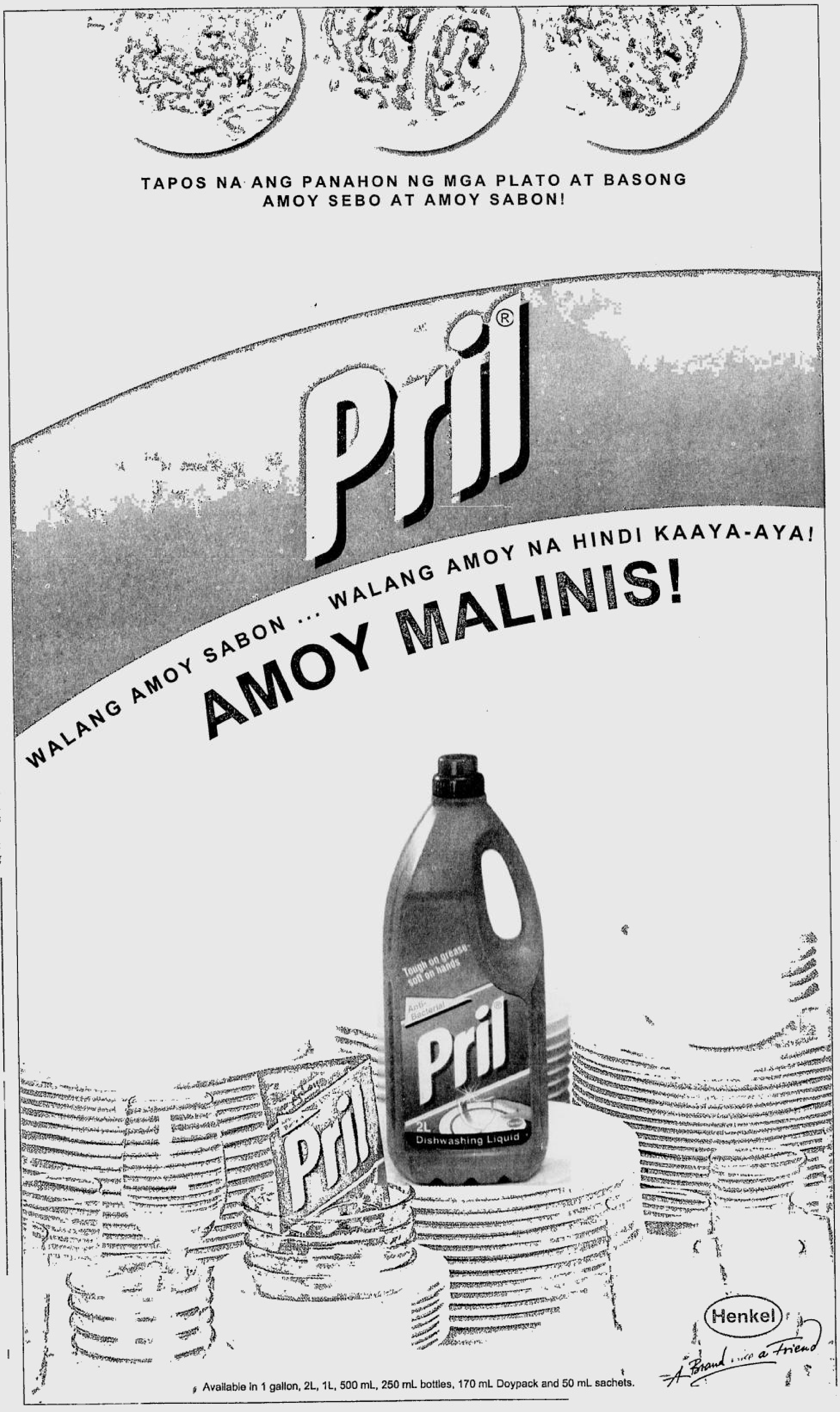
SBC'S Caesar Salad, Roast Beef on Dark Rye Bread and Italian Sub

Salad and sandwich delights

SEATTLE'S Best Coffee introduces new additions to its selection of complete meals.

Roast Beef on Dark Rye Bread is complemented by fresh lettuce, tomatoes and creamy horseradish mayonnaise. Italian Sub is French bread stuffed with Swiss mortadella, salami, honey ham, cheddar cheese, lettuce and cucumber, laced with light Italian dressing.

Caesar's Salad combines Caesar dressing, Romaine lettuce, crunchy croutons, crisp bacon bits and parmesan cheese. A mix of tuna flakes, potatoes, green beans and olives set on a bed of lettuce with light Italian dressing makes Salad Nicoise an instant favorite. For something light and tasty, you can't go wrong with SBC Chef's Salad, mixed field greens topped with ham, tomatoes, cucumber, hard-boiled eggs and Thousand Island dressing.


TAPOS NA ANG PANAHON NG MGA PLATO AT BASONG AMOY SEBO AT AMOY SABON!
Pril®
WALANG AMOY SABON ... WALANG AMOY NA HINDI KAAYA-AYA!
AMOY MALINIS!
Tough on grease-soft on hands
Anti-Bacterial
Pril
2L
Dishwashing Liquid
Pril
Available in 1 gallon, 2L, 1L, 500 mL, 250 mL bottles, 170 mL Doypack and 50 mL sachets.
Henkel
A Brand ... a Friend

A most savory season

From page C1

Easter used to be celebrated for three days with special food

mal is Holy Thursday's Lamb of God celebration. In Morong, Rizal, a lamb made from mashed *camote* and condensed milk is carried in a charming procession. When no one knew how a lamb looked—there being few, if any, lambs around and just a few pictures of it—the lamb could resemble anything with four legs that was then covered with cotton balls.

"When the lamb was cut up after its Church blessing and eaten to symbolize Christ's sacrifice, cotton fluff stuck in one's teeth was a common complaint. Today one simply uses an imported copper or plastic mold of a lamb.

"Making a *cordero* big enough to feed the barrio takes lots of ingredients and muscle to make. It's like cooking *jalea*, if not worse, because the result has to be white, not scorched," Sandok explained.

Colored eggs

"Because eggs were not allowed during the 40-day fast before Easter, those kept for eating after Easter were coated with wax to help preserve them. Dying them different colors made them attractive," said TJC.

"But that custom along with egg hunts did not reach the Philippines till American times," Sandok remarked. "In pre-colonial days, *herbolarios* in Leyte used eggs to cure. In Ilocos, thanksgiving rites required the first fruits of harvest, an assortment of cooked foods and always eggs. In Benguet, a widow's basket always has eggs that after the funeral are eaten by her as part of a purification ritual."

"I read in the chronicles of the first Spanish Governor-General of the Philippines, Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, that eggs were vital when cleansing a member of a community liberated from captivity. After bathing in the sea or river, the celebrant knelt to receive a dousing of coconut water from a priestess, then an egg yolk poured over his head, and finally a bath," TJC recalled.

"Many philosophers have seen the egg as emblematic of the world's four elements," said Sandok. "The shell is earth; the white, water; the yolk, fire; and air is under the shell at one end."

"I also remember that among ancient Filipinos, the egg was sacred enough to figure in peace pacts," TJC added. "Each participant took an egg in his hand, and while crushing it to pieces recited: 'May he who does not keep his word be destroyed in a like manner.' The egg was deemed so powerful among Maranaw at one time that when trying to catch a thief, an egg would be broken over a fire in the belief that the culprit would then be blinded, wherever he might be."

Post Easter provisions

The Joyful Cook spied her neighbor's rooster strutting about in her kitchen herb patch, followed by a harem of hens and their chicks. "Oh dear, there he goes again, trampling up the curly parsley and munching on the newly sown basil seeds," she said.

"Don't fret," Sandok said. "If all you've said about eggs is true then it will help to let Aling Nena know you're letting her fowl roam in your backyard."

With that there was a voice from beyond the bamboo fence calling home the brood and shouting instructions to send a basket of fresh eggs from the free-range chickens to TJC.

"Now you can send a dozen eggs and order special *bibingka* from Aling Rosa," said Saint Sandok, looking forward to old-fashion richness as found in a traditional *merienda*, stove-top cake made with *galapong*. "We've got to protect our food traditions, and that's not just ingredients but methods and tastes," he added, knowing he'd be party to an outstanding Philippine high tea shortly with TJC's nod of approval.

Next: Rice cake round-up

Summer classes on resto business

ENROLL in the Maya Kitchen's summer classes and learn how to get into the restaurant business.

Know the ins and outs of Rice in a Box Business on May 3, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.. Learn about food hygiene, sanitation, costing, licensing requirement, capitalization, basic equipment, layout, sourcing, storage, costing with actual menu presentation. Recipes to jump-start your food business like Drunken Chicken, Beef Tenderloin with Leeks, Crispy Porkchop, Spareribs with Sweet and Spicy Sauce, Clams in Yellow Sauce will be demonstrated by Sita Ram, Maya Kitchen's chef consultant.

The course on Pinoy Fastfood (Carinderia, Pondohan, Lugawan, etc.) will be conducted May 24, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. There will be lectures on the technical and operational aspects of the business, hygiene, sanitation and safety, costing and actual cooking demonstration of popular low-cost, fast-food recipes—different kinds of Lomi, Pork Asado, Fresh and Fried Lumpia, Pancit Malabon, Adobong Pusit, and different kinds of barbecue. Menu samplers, use of extenders and many more will also be discussed.

The certificate course on Basic Cake Decoration will be conducted May 3 and 10, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.. Learn the fundamentals of cake decorating, coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate and sugar icing), basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif. Decorating tips will also be given.

Call 892-1186/5011 local 108 or visit the Maya Kitchen, Tuesday-Friday, 8/F Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City. E-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

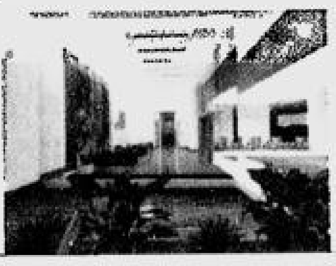
Location, location, location.

Strategically situated at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue (Buendia), The Columns, Ayala Avenue, Community Innovations, Inc.'s newest development, redefines high rise living. It provides the convenience and prestige of city life, and is within walking distance to the business, commercial and entertainment hubs of Makati's central business district.

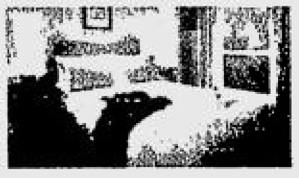
The ideal first home of the young urban achievers who want to *live a few steps from everything*.

Garden in the city. At the Columns, Ayala Avenue, nature communes with urban living. Its design creates an open-space environment and relaxing surroundings. The interplay of greens and Zen gardens that adorn the Grand Lobbies of each tower give a soothing experience to residents and guests alike.

Three towers of power. Three towers on a continuous podium level define The Columns, Ayala Avenue. Each tower will have 30 storeys, 23 of which will be residential. The five-level upper ground parking is shielded from the outside by an artwork that gives the building prominence along Ayala and Buendia Avenues.

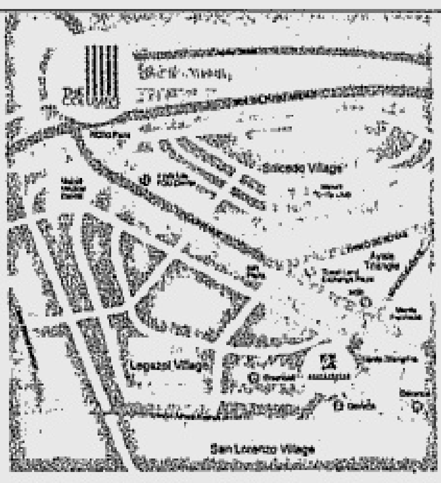


The layout maximizes the advantages of its prominent site, which allows more units to be facing the morning sun while avoiding the afternoon heat. Natural lighting and good ventilation are also taken into consideration in each of the studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom residential units - a rare feature among residential condominiums.



To create a more open feel for space, select units even have bay windows: others have balconies overlooking the city. The top three levels will house very private units, which have breath-taking scenery.

The Recreational Club, which stretches across the 7th floor podium of all three towers, provides residents a source of recreation and an ideal venue for socializing with other residents. It has a 25-meter adults' lap pool, kids' pool, spacious function rooms with spill-over area, a gym, game room with mini-theater, daycare center with indoor and outdoor play area, communal wine cellar, jogging path and transient rooms for the residents' guests - almost like a hotel!



To make it even more fascinating, the ground floor will have landscaped plazas, a row of cafes and al fresco dining spots, indeed the perfect setting for unwinding after a day's busy schedule.

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CECILLE Ysmael's specialty: Poulet Provençal, baked spring chicken stuffed with vegetables

French 'lechon manok'

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

IN the summer of 1999, Cecille Ysmael and hubby Louie went to the south of France for a brief vacation. On the way to Saint-Tropez, the aromatic smell and sight of roasted chicken sold on street corners was so irresistible the couple bought a whole piece.

"In the south of France, they roast chicken like Andok's chicken here," says 33-year-old Ysmael. "The chicken was so good, very tasty and flavorful because of the herbs used."

PRIVATE SPECIALTY

When the couple returned to Manila, Ysmael, who's known by family and friends to be a good cook, went straight to the kitchen and tried to duplicate the roast chicken from Provence.

"Without bragging, I got the same fragrant smell and savory taste right away," Ysmael proudly says. Although she has had no formal culinary training, Ysmael can easily identify the herbs, spices and other ingredients that go into every dish she eats.

Ysmael started cooking at 16. "I enjoy cooking and when Louie became my boyfriend in 1997, he encouraged me to go into real cooking by learning the different

FRENCH/ D2

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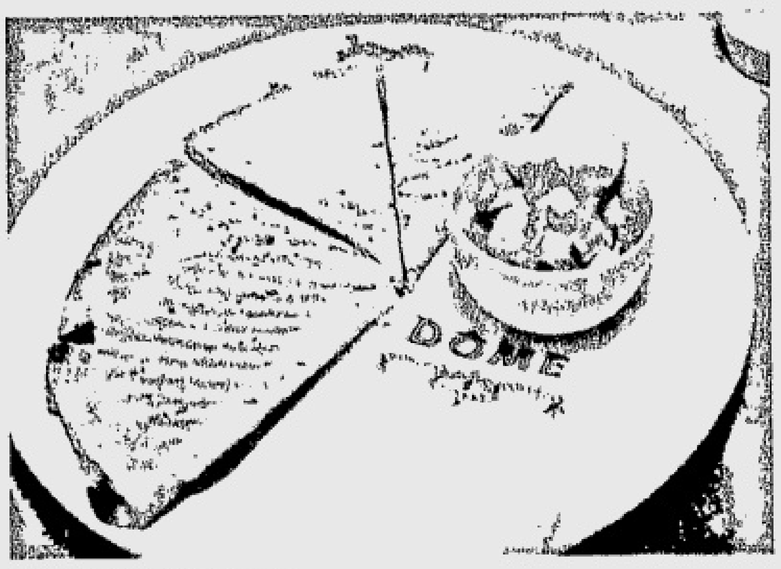

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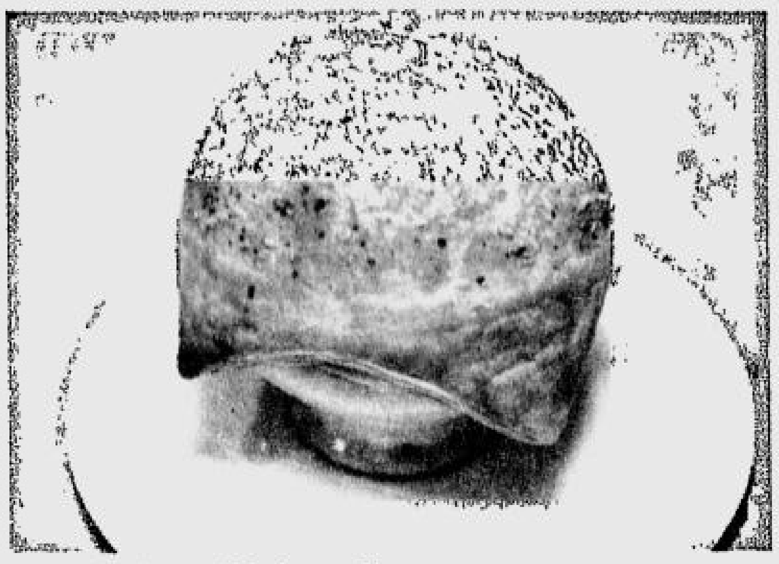


DOME Chicken and Mushroom Pie

DOME Carrot Cake

Have a Java

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Johnny Villena

There's more to Dome Café than cups of coffee—salads, sandwiches, pasta, pizza, quesadilla, cakes, even live music on certain nights

CAFES and restaurants are discovering they can keep guests for an entire evening—for a meal and after-dinner entertainment—as they add live musical performances to their menu. Dome Café has done just that.

"Java Nights Live is our way of introducing the new bar concept," said Patricia Riingen, general manager of Dome Café. "Through Java Nights, we aim to present Dome as the place for the ideal nightcap or a venue for friends to unwind. Also, it's a way to showcase what our local talents have to offer."

Java Nights offers a complete evening for Dome's guests. "They have dinner, and then they can stay for music and dancing. They don't have to go anywhere else," Riingen continued.

At Dome Café Shangri-La, diners can watch Noel Cabangon on Thursdays, Acoustic Dreams on Fridays and Mitch on Saturdays while at Dome Café Podium, it's Noel Cabangon on Mondays and Mitch on Tuesdays. First set starts at 8:30 p.m. At Dome Café Solidmills Building in Legaspi Village, Makati, program starts at 8 p.m.

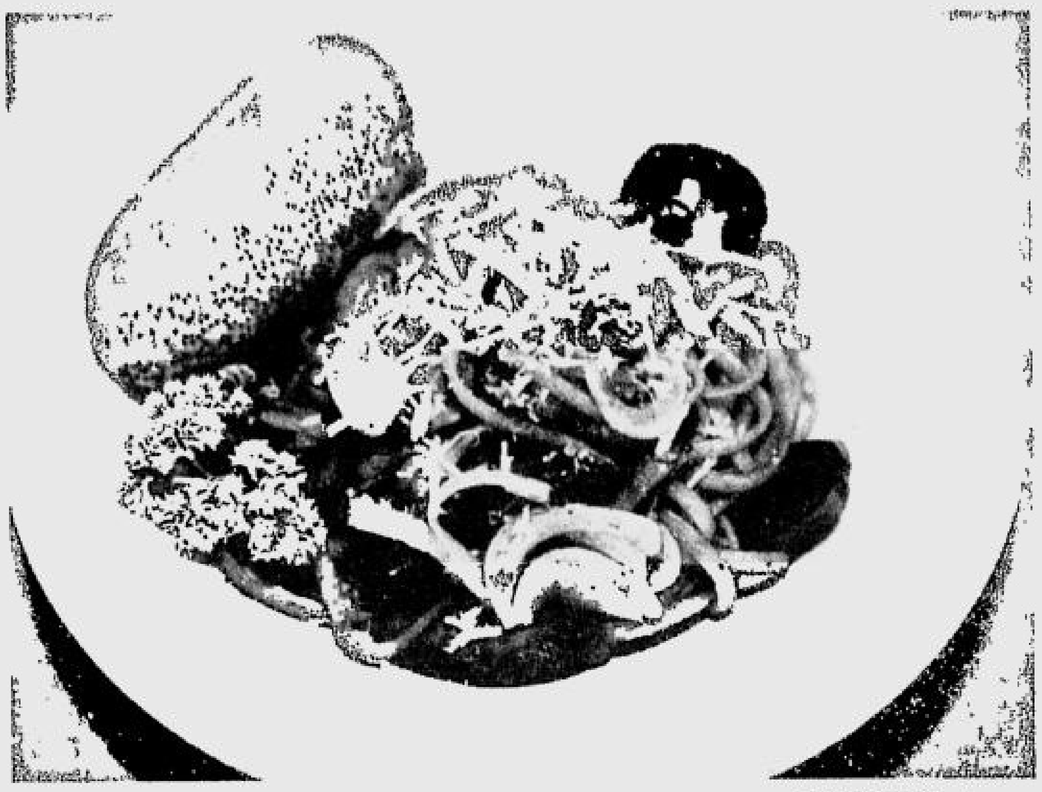
Finding success with the combo approach, Riingen says the combination appeals to three target markets. "One is the diner who wants adventurous cuisine. Then there are the music lover and the customer who wants to both dine and be entertained. We've created a one-stop shop, in a way."

Morning tradition

Bottomless, steaming cups of hot Java are a longstanding morning tradition, but that's changing. People increasingly are drinking coffee, but they're drinking it differently. Hot drip coffee is still the norm, but now it has been joined on breakfast tables by iced coffee, flavored coffee and espresso drinks. Specialty coffees are on the rise, too.

"Coffee is the crown to a meal," said Riingen. "If customers get a bad cup of coffee, that's the last thing they'll remember. And if they have a good cup of coffee, they'll have an overall better impression of a café or restaurant."

Obviously, coffee is huge in the Philippines right now. And many companies such as Dome have been setting the pace.



CHORIZO Pasta

DOME'S mural shows Dome espresso is a fine blend of four types of Arabica beans from Columbia, Brazil, Costa Rica and New Guinea.

ON CALL Band performed during the launch of Java Nights at Dome Café Shangri-La.

"As people become familiar with paying P65 for a cup of coffee, it becomes possible for retailers to do more with that P65," Riingen said. So better coffee has become available as consumers have come to demand it. "I think that more and more people are identifying themselves as specialty coffee and gourmet coffee drinkers."

She notes, however, that consumers who like flavored coffee don't reserve it for special occasions; they also drink it as part of breakfast on a regular basis.

Although gourmet coffee does not generally come in bottomless cups, Riingen points out that gourmet coffee drinkers are more likely to drink larger cups of coffee—more than 8 ounces—than traditional consumers.

But even in the world of mainstream coffee, consumption is on the rise, according to Riingen.

The public seems to have changed its view of iced coffee in particular, which used to be a seasonal drink, popular only during the summer months. Now it seems to be more an everyday alternative to hot coffee or soda.

Treats

Dome Café, the Australian franchise famous for its wide selection of gourmet food and fine coffee, is open daily, 7 a.m.-11 p.m, for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

All breakfast sets come with a choice of Long Black/Flat White/Cappuccino, Tea by the cup, Hot Chocolate, Chococcino, Fruit Juice or oversized Iced Tea.

Its starters include soups, Papadams, Smoked Salmon Platter, Croque Monsieur, Riblets.

Aside from hot and iced beverage, Dome also proffers salads, gourmet sandwiches, hot kitchen and Asian specials, gourmet pies and pizzas, quesadillas, pasta, vegetarian selections, cakes and desserts and ice cream.

Dome Café also has lunch buffet offerings until April 30. Diners can create their own salad from the salad bar and have their fill of pastas and other treats for P198. Or upgrade their lunch buffet to P248 and they can have a refillable glass of iced tea and dessert in addition to the buffet selection. This is available at Dome Greenbelt, Mondays-Fridays, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

At Dome Café Shangri-La, you can feast on roast beef, salads and pasta selections for P350 every Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Other Dome Café outlets are located at The Podium, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong; Solidmills Mills Building, Dela Rosa Street corner Adelantado Street, Legaspi Village, Makati; and Rockwell, 2/F, Lifestyle section, Powerplant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

YSMAEL'S Poulet Provençal was inspired by the roast chicken she once tasted at Saint-Tropez

French 'lechon manok'

From page D1

cuisines and other famous specialties," she says.

Her favorite is Thai food—curries, *phad thai* and *tom yang goong*—as well as the Singaporean Hainanese chicken. Spanish cuisine comes next—*tapas, paella, callos* and *gambas al ajillo*. Ysmael can also whip up a mean *kare-kareng pata* using Lady's Choice peanut butter and *malagkit* rice to make the dish creamier. She also cooks her own *ginisang bagoong*.

Chicken specialty

Ysmael likes to cook for friends, serving them her French, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese specialties. But she is most proud of her baked chicken that always gets raves from family and friends.

Poulet Provençal, Ysmael's famed baked chicken, was inspired by the roast chicken she once tasted at Saint-Tropez. However, instead of roasting the chicken, she bakes it giving it a different taste and texture.

Poulet Provençal is a spring chicken stuffed with tomatoes, olives, garlic and capsicum and baked to perfection. "The secret is in the herbs and spices," reveals Ysmael.

She uses herbes de Provence, an aromatic mixture of dried rosemary, thyme, lavender and other seasonings common to Provençal cooking. It is available in many supermarket spice racks, including Santi's Deli.

Ysmael also adds zucchini or courgettes for stuffing. "The tender chicken also gets the flavoring from its own juices and vegetables."

A combination of herbs collectively known as herbes de Provence gives Poulet Provençal its unique taste

Kitchen creations

Ysmael and her husband run the popular V Bar (formerly Venezia) at Glorietta 1, Ayala Center, where she keeps busy in the kitchen. "I help in the kitchen, teaching the staff some new dishes."

Most of the pasta recipes at V Bar menu are actually hers, including the tuna pasta, sardines pasta and arrabbiata. Her creations are usually as colorful and elaborately composed as fine art, tasting even better than they look.

Ysmael's inspiration comes from a wide range of sources—magazines, books and travels. She seems at peace when she's in the kitchen, deriving pure pleasure from being wife to Louie. She says her husband's very responsible, loving, thoughtful and caring. Even though he's very busy with his work, he finds time to join her for dinner.

As much as possible, the Ysmaels try to keep their evenings free for an intimate dinner for two at home. A typical dinner consists of soup, salad, two or three main dishes and a dessert. "It's never one main dish. We love to eat and we like variety," she says.

During her yearly trips abroad, Ysmael keeps up with trends by dining in different classy restaurants. The exercise helps improve her culinary skills.

Like her Poulet Provençal, her baked chicken continues to win praises from people who get the chance to taste it. "It's a totally different dish, another recipe to add to our growing list of baked chicken variations," says Ysmael.

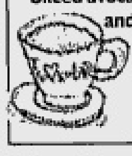
Poulet Provençal

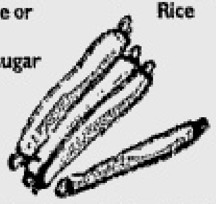
(Baked chicken from Provence)
1 whole chicken
200 g red capsicums, cubed
200 g zucchini, cubes
250 g onion and tomato, cubes
2 heads garlic, peeled and separated
50 g black olives
3 tsp herbes de Provence
2 tsp olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

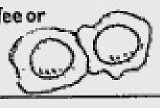
Pre-heat oven at 350°F. Lay the whole chicken in a baking dish and baste with olive oil, salt and pepper and herbes de Provence. Put the peeled garlic in the cavity of the chicken. Place or surround it with the vegetables (tomatoes, onions, capsicums, zucchinis and black olives) and bake for 45 minutes. Serve on a platter garnished with fruits and vegetables.

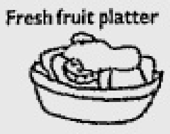
E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

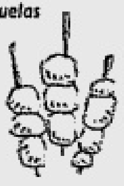
	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	Corned beef *guisado* with cabbage Rice or toasted *pan de sal* Hot chocolate, coffee or milk Sliced avocado with sugar and milk	Pork or chicken *adobo* with mango balls Vegetable chopsuey Rice	*Sinigang na isda* with *kangkong* and *labanos* Rice Chilled wedges of chico
TUESDAY	Hotcake with butter and maple syrup Crispy honeycured bacon Hot chocolate, coffee or milk Papaya with *calamansi*	*Lumpiang ubod* Fried breaded porkchop Rice Melon shake	Chicken *tinola* with green papaya and *sili* leaves Rice Ripe mango à la mode
WEDNESDAY	Cereal with milk Vienna sausage Hot *pan de sal* Butter and fruit jam Hot chocolate, coffee or milk	*Pancit canton* Sweet and sour fish Fruit cocktail gelatin	Pot roast Buttered vegetables Chilled wedges of chico with *sago* and cream
THURSDAY	Garlic rice Chicken tocino Fried egg Hot chocolate, coffee or milk Pineapple	Pork *afritada* Rice Sherbet or ice cream	Steamed fish, restaurant-style *Adobong kangkong* Mango gelatin
FRIDAY	*Champorado* Toasted *dilis* Fresh fruit platter	*Halaan* soup Fried *tanigue* with fruite sweet and sour sauce Rice *Kinayod* na melon with milk	Beef steak with mango balls and *wansoy* Baby *bok choy* with oyster sauce Rice Canned lychee with crushed ice
SATURDAY	Cereal with milk Pan-grilled ham or Spam Toasted bread Butter and fruit jam Hot chocolate, coffee or milk Avocado shake	Pork barbecue with pineapple wedges *Pancit sotanghon gulsado* Chilled *siniguelas*	Fruited chicken salad Roast beef Mashed potatoes Fresh fruit platter
SUNDAY	Garlic rice *Hamonadong longganiza* Fried egg Hot chocolate, coffee or milk Ripe mangoes	Paella Fish *kilawin* Fresh fruit platter	Vegetable tempura Chicken teriyaki Rice Buko sherbet

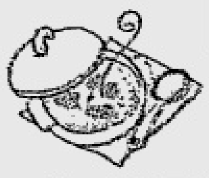


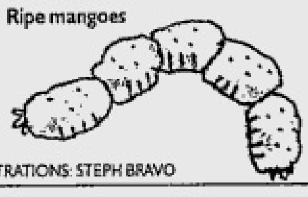












ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

Fruity menu for summer

THE MARKETS are abloom with ripe mangoes, avocados, chicos, melons and *siningueIas*. Now that these fruits are in season and affordable, let us use them as part of our menu to enjoy their peak flavor. Fresh fruits can be added to shakes as refreshing thirst-quencher or can be incorporated in certain recipes to uplift tried-and-tested favorites.

Pork or Chicken Adobo with Mango Balls

1/3 c native vinegar (*sukang paombong*)
3 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp oyster sauce
¼ c chopped garlic
1 piece bay leaf (*laurel*)
¼ c white sugar
black pepper to taste
12 pieces chicken thighs
or 1 whole chicken, cut-up
or 1 kg pork *kasim*, cut into cubes
½-1 c water
Topping:
Ripe mango balls
Chopped spring onions or sprigs of coriander

In a large saucepan combine the ingredients for the *adobo*. Let stand for 15-30 minutes. Pour in ½ cup of water. Place over medium heat and allow to boil without stirring. Lower the flame and allow to simmer until the chicken or pork is done. Add more water if necessary.

When ready to serve, top cooked *adobo* with mango balls and spring onions or coriander.

Chilled Wedges of Chico with Sago and Cream

½ kg cooked *sago* (preferably big size)
½ kg ripe chico, peeled, seeded and sliced into wedges
Dressing:
1 c grated cheddar cheese
½ c cream in can
1/3-½ c condensed milk
Optional topping:
Cornflakes

Wash the cooked *sago* in running water. Transfer to a colander. Boil some water in a saucepan. Pour the boiling water over the cooked *sago*. Rinse briefly in running water. Drain well and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the cheese, the cream and the condensed milk. Mix well. Pour in the *sago* and the prepared chico. Toss gently to blend. Keep chilled.

When ready to serve, scoop out a generous amount of the salad in an ice cream cup or soup bowl. Top with cornflakes.

Fruited Chicken Salad

2 pieces chicken breast, boiled, skinned, deboned and cut into chunks
1 c raw salad macaroni noodles, cooked as package directs
2 c cubed ripe mango
½ c all-purpose cream
1 c mayonnaise
3 tbsp white sugar
½ c cubed cheddar cheese
Black pepper to taste

In a large bowl, pour the ingredients in the order given above. Toss gently to mix and chill for at least an hour before serving.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking classes at Dorothy's Cooking School at 48 Third Street, New Manila, QC. Call 721-7735.

New restaurant row opens

RIKKI Dee of Osake; Francisco H. Licuanan III, ALI president; Gerry Apolinario of Gerry's Grill; Filbert Alquiros of Gilligan's Island; Raphael Soon of North Park; Miriam Katigbak, ALI SVP; Jim Fuentebella of Max's; and Sonny Dee of W The Big Grill

THE NEW Glorietta 2 Restaurant Row was formally launched recently with a street party.

The Sex Bomb Girls, Streetboys and Streetkids led the entertainment.

Celebrity guests included Pops Fernandez, German Moreno and Andrea del Rosario. The new restaurant row includes Osake for Japanese cuisine, North Park for Chinese food, Gerry's Grill for *inihaw*, Max's fried chicken, W The Big Grill's steaks, lamb, fish and vegetables; and Gilligan's seafood.

Also at the launch were members of the La Salle basketball team, China Cojuangco, Waya Gallardo, Mitch Valdes and her little boys, Robby Mananquil, Reggie Curley, Alfred Vargas, and the Mutya ng Pilipinas contestants.

Members of "Click" present included Karen de los Reyes, Lester Llansang, Angel Locsin and Crystal Moreno, who joined other GMA 7 talents like Chubi del Rosario, Gabby Eigenmann and Biboy Ramirez.

ABS-CBN's Talent Center was represented by Paola Peralejo, JM Rodriguez and Wilma Doesnt. Singers Nonoy Zuñiga and Lloyd Umali were also there.

Top executives of Ayala attended led by Ayala Land Inc. president Francisco H. Licuanan III, senior vice president Miriam O. Katigbak, assistant vice presidents Rowena Tomeldan and Winnie Nazareth.

Rachel Alejandro hosted the program that featured the Great Divide and New Groove bands.

The Glorietta 2 Restaurant Row is located on Pasay Road, between Park Square 1 and Park Square 2.

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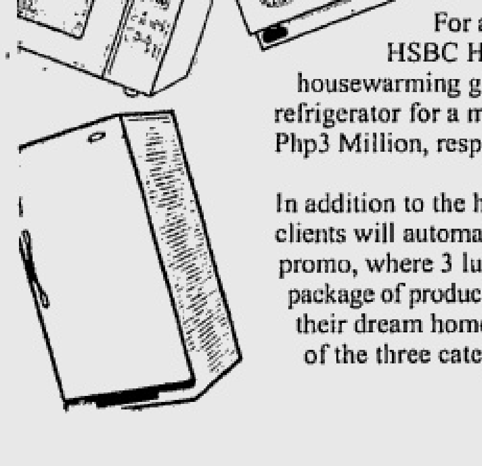


Like marriage, your home loan comes with a few surprises.

For a limited time only, until 30 April 2003, all new HSBC Home Loan clients will automatically receive a housewarming gift of either a microwave oven or single-door refrigerator for a minimum loan amount of Php700,000 and Php3 Million, respectively.

In addition to the housewarming gifts, all new HSBC Home Loan clients will automatically be entered in the Beautiful Home Raffle promo, where 3 lucky winners will each receive an extraordinary package of products and services – of their own choice – to complete their dream home. All winners will choose one item from each of the three categories:

Home Improvement:
- Solahart water-heating system
- Sentricon termite-proofing system
- Landscaping by Bulacan Gardens
- Glass etching

Furniture and Appliances:
- Sony 29" wide-screen TV
- LG Collins 20 cu. ft. side-by-side refrigerator
- Carrier 2-hp split-type air-conditioning system
- Forty Winks queen bed with mattress & night table

Family Treasures:
- Family portrait with frame (24" x 30")
- Lladro porcelain sculpture
- Pool table, standard-size
- Aquarium set, 75 gallons

Apply for a home loan from HSBC now.

Hurry! **Call HSBC at 878-5151 or visit our website www.hsbc.com.ph.**

"My crowning glory was restored with more hair!"
Before Svenson
22 YEARS OF SVENSON More Hair. More Confidence.
Now with new hair from Svenson

"Because of my thinning hair, I became envious of people who could style their thick hair easily. I wanted a fuller look to restore the crowning glory of my hair. With Svenson's Non-Surgical Hair Integration Method, more hair was added to give it a lush, thick look. I can naturally style it and even swim with it. In fact, this is how my own hair would really look if I didn't experience hair loss in the first place!"

Louren Dacanay
Branch Manager,
Phoenix Educational Systems

Woman AT Svenson

MAKATI	QUEZON CITY	BINONDO	ALABANG	CEBU
819-3336	372-6631	243-0128	842-1389	032-2340851
816-1260	372-6632	244-8913	842-4181	032-2340853

MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

PS 423 PAASI

Showcase of Cuban, Caribbean and Spanish dishes

DINING OUT

CAFE Havana Greenbelt is a great place to sample Cuban, Caribbean and Spanish dishes. Its lunch buffet is from Monday to Friday, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Call 757-4371 or 70.

CASA Armas continues its Spanish Culinary Journey until April 30. Order paellas like Valenciana, Marinera, Negra, and Verdura and get a free dessert. It also presents "Hot Sangria Nights" on April 25. It is a buy-one-take-one promo where diners who order a glass of Sangria instantly get one glass free. The promo can be availed at Greenbelt 3 and Podium outlets. Call 897-3605 for Jupiter branch or 687-3370 for Ortigas branch. Visit the new Casa Armas Tapas Bar at the 3/F of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati.

SHANGRI-LA Hotels and Resorts in the Philippines and Philippine Airlines Mabuhay Miles introduce the new Dine for Miles programme until June 30. This program allows guests to dine in any of participating restaurants and bars of all four Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts in the Philippines and earn 300 miles for a minimum bill of P1,500 on a single guest check. Call (632) 818-0111 and (032) 340-0191.

TEQUILA Joe's is going all out for lunch with eight lunch meals such as Salpicao Rice, Oriental Chicken Rice, Fire-grilled BLT, Big Joe Burger, Salad and Shrimp, Mandarin Salad, 2 Fry Chicken, and Grilled Ribs for as low as P199 with Lipton Ice Tea. Served daily from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. TJ's branches are located at El Pueblo in Ortigas Center, Glorietta 4 Makati, Alabang Town Center, Ayala Center in Cebu, Tomas Morato and Robinsons Place Malate.

SUPER Bowl of China now accepts reservations for parties and other functions at its branch on Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati City. It offers three buffet packages. Customized menus are also available. Its other branches are located at Megastrip of SM Megamall and Glorietta IV. Call 890-0006 or 747-2128.

CAFE Berrio at Discovery Suites showcases Italian and Mexican, Caribbean, Cajun, and French cuisine and Filipino classics. The buffet lunch features soups, hot and cold dishes, and desserts. Discovery Suites is located at 25 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 683-8212 and 635-2222.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko features an Asian and International Buffet and set lunch menus at any of its restaurants: Benkay (Japanese), Benjarong (Thai) and Thien Duong (Vietnamese). Call 867-3333 extensions 3301-3304.

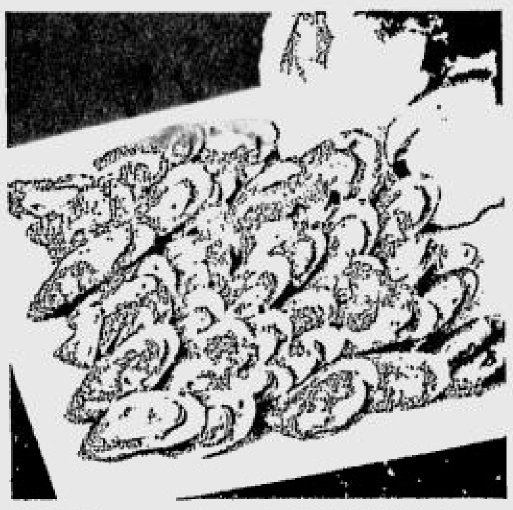
THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza's China Sea features Chinese meals like Fried Pork Ribs Wrapped in Special Rice Paper, Baked Stuffed Chicken Wings with Chinese Ham, Pan Fried Shrimp Cake, Sauteed Frog with Bittergourd in Black Beans Sauce, Steamed Beancurd Stuffed with Meat, and Stewed Mussels Chiu Chow Style until April 30. Call 551-5555.

AT Richmonde Hotel's Exchange Bar, savor dim sum favorites, barbecue dishes with Satay Sauce or Yang Chow Fried Rice and noodle selections. The hotel's Lobby Cafe offers freshly baked goods like ensaymada, cinnamon roll, fruit Danish, chicken and tuna turnover, and raisin, cheese and sesame breads. Call 638-7777 local 3732.

TAPA KING offers free unlimited refills of Nestea iced tea. It complements Pinoy favorites like Tapa King, Tapa Queen, Tapa Prince, Salpicao, Tapa Adobo, Arroz a la Cubana, Pork Asado, boneless bangus, porkchop and palabok.

NATIONAL Sports Grill recently launched "Kung Fu Pasta," linguini pasta sauteed with diced chicken, shrimp, red bell pepper, and roasted peanuts, tossed in Oriental sauces. NSG is located at the 3/F, Greenbelt 1, Makati City. Call 752-5431.

VISIT any Sbarro outlet and have a chance to take home lovely tumblers while enjoying the restaurant's Italian dishes. For a minimum single receipt food purchase of P150, get a Sbarro tumbler for only P180 (silver) and P150 (red). Sbarro outlets are located at SM City North Edsa, SM Megamall Bldg. A, Glorietta 2 in Ayala, Robinsons Place Manila, and Festivall Mall in Alabang.



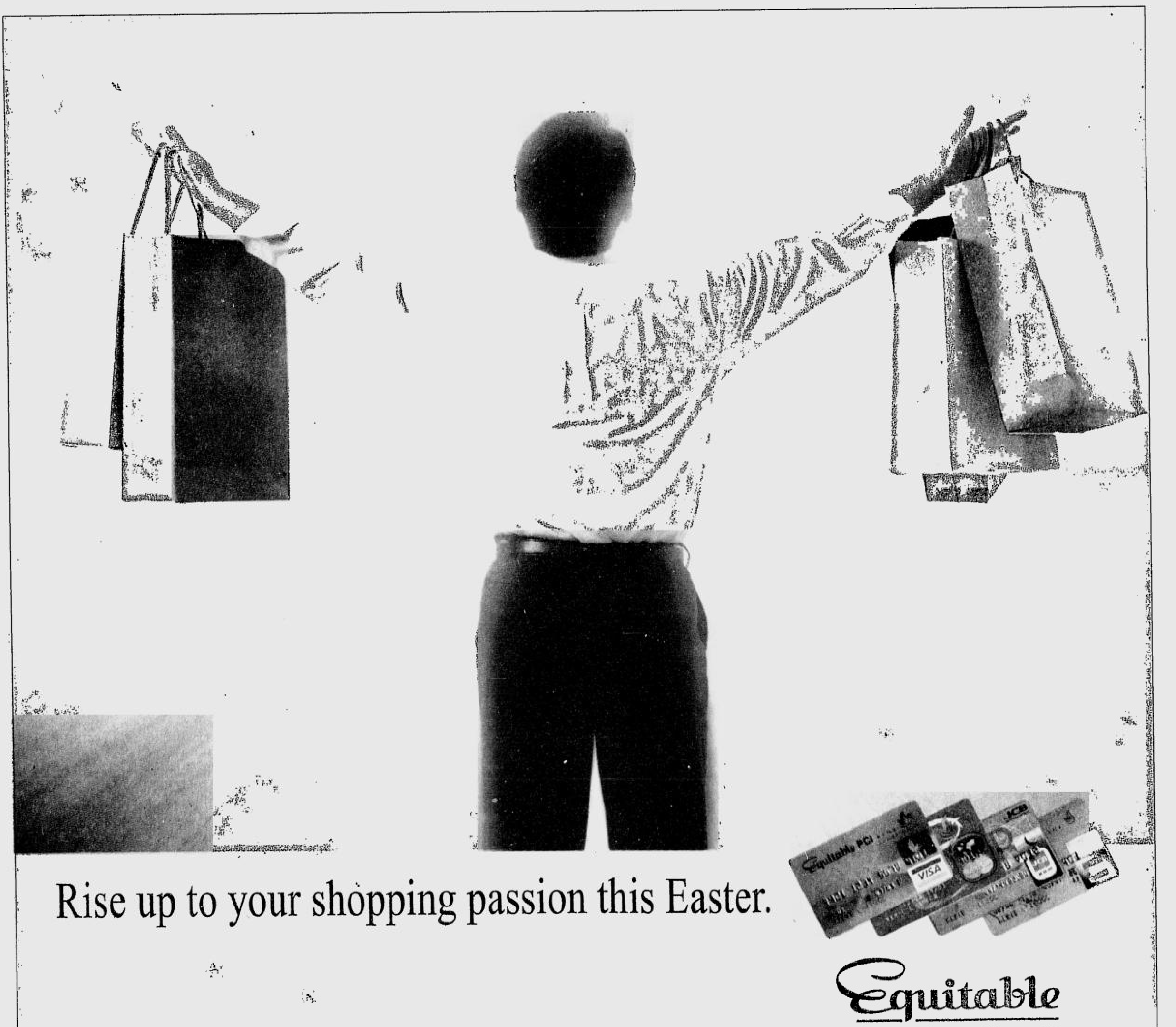
DADS features the Italian buffet festival, Kamayan Seafood Festival and Saisaki Tokyo Festival. The buffet is available at all Dads branches: SM Megamall, Glorietta 3, and Alabang Town Center. Call 532-3004.

KAISEKI Japanese Cuisine offers Sukiyaki, Gyoza, Maki, Sushi, soba noodles, cha soba, steamed chicken roll and desserts. The restaurant is located at The Fort, Bonifacio Global City. Call 889-1005 and 889-0520.

NEW World Renaissance Hotel's Bocarinos presents its new dinner a la carte menu. Sample Caesar Salad or Seafood Temptation platter with fresh oysters, scallops, shrimp and mussels served on ice. Prime Rib is also offered. Call 811-6888.

PINOY Sizzlers is now open at Food Park at the Enterprise, 4th Level of the Enterprise Center, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Pinoy Sizzlers offers all-time Filipino favorites at affordable prices. You can also visit Pinoy Sizzlers at Marketplace, Times Plaza Building, U.N. Avenue corner Taft Avenue, Manila.

STREETLIFE Remix dishes out Chinese cuisine in a jiffy with Mongkok Dimsum & Noodles. These items also come as part of Streetlife's P99 Specials served with Nestea Iced Tea or Lemonade.


Rise up to your shopping passion this Easter.

Earn **double E-points** for every P50 worth of credit purchase when you use your Equitable Card from **April 15 to May 14, 2003.** For more information, call the 24-hour Equitable Hello Service at 867-7977(Metro Manila) or 1-800-1888-3264 (Domestic Toll-Free).

Equitable CARD

www.equitablecard.com

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0839, Series of 2003